"AN EYE FOR AN EYE," By Ellen Frizell Wyckoff, Will APPEAR NEXT WEEK

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LOVE'S GUILTY DREAM;

OR

THE IDOL OF THE REGIMENT.

BY ADRIENNE ROUCOLLE

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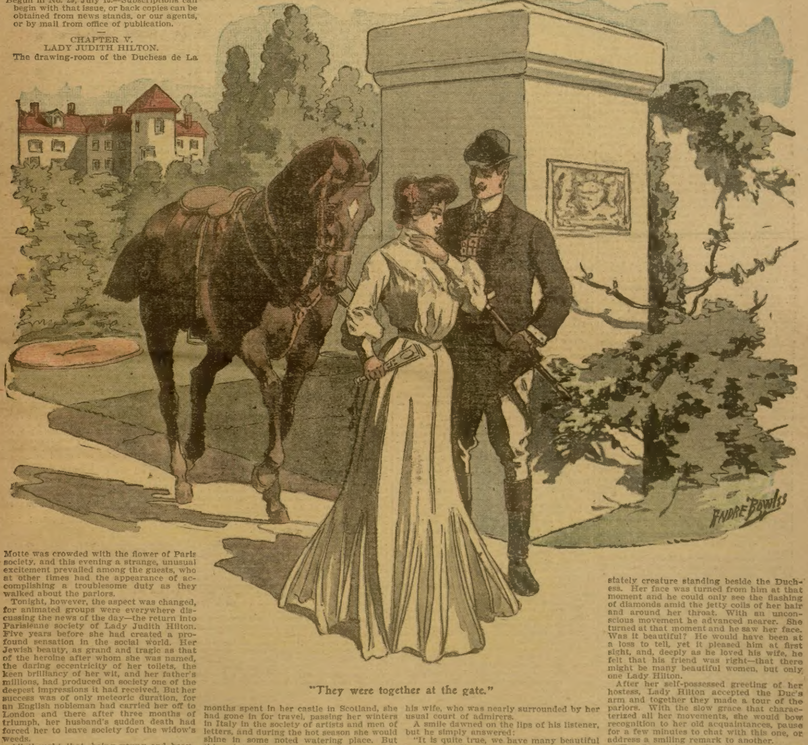
CHAPTER V.
LADY JUDITH HILTON.



"They were together at the gate."

The drawing-room of the Duchess de La Motte was crowded with the flower of Paris society, and this evening a strange, unusual excitement prevailed among the guests, who at other times had the appearance of accomplishing a troublesome duty as they walked about the parlors.

Tonight, however, the aspect was changed, for animated groups were everywhere discussing the news of the day—the return into Parisienne society of Lady Judith Hilton. Five years before she had created a profound sensation in the social world. Her Jewish beauty, as grand and tragic as that of the heroine after whom she was named, the daring eccentricity of her toilets, the keen brilliancy of her wit, and her father's millions, had produced on society one of the deepest impressions it had received. But her success was of only meteoric duration, for an English nobleman had carried her off to London and there after three months of triumph, her husband's sudden death had forced her to leave society for the widow's weeds.

All thought that, being young and beautiful, Lady Hilton would, after the year's mourning, return to Paris and resume her old place in the society of the capital. That she had never loved her husband was known to all, since in some unknown way the story of her marriage had come to light. Their union had been but a business transaction, in which Lord Hilton had sold his title to the old Spanish-Jew banker in exchange for the millions of his daughter's dot.

Contrary to the expectations of all, Lady Hilton did not return to Paris. After a few months spent in her castle in Scotland, she had gone in for travel, passing her winters in Italy in the society of artists and men of letters, and during the hot season she would shine in some noted watering place. But this winter she had decided to return to Paris, and the Duchess' parlors were the first honored by her presence.

The Marquis du Terrail had never met Lady Hilton, as she had made her first appearance in Parisienne circles while he was serving his time at the regiment. Tonight, as he was hearing her beauty, her wit, her elegance, praised by every lip, he said to one of his friends:

"This Lady Hilton must be very beautiful indeed if she hopes to eclipse some of our beauties," and his eyes wandered toward his wife, who was nearly surrounded by her usual court of admirers.

A smile dawned on the lips of his listener, but he simply answered:

"It is quite true, we have many beautiful women, but there is only one Lady Hilton. It is not mere perfection of the features, nor the matchless symmetry of the figure, which arrest the attention, but a strange magnetism which is felt at once and never forgotten. Besides, she is an elegant dresser, a brilliant conversationalist and a person who by extensive travel has broadened her views on all subjects. But why this lengthy description, since you have but to turn your head and you will see Lady Hilton herself? She is just entering the drawing-room."

Du Terrail turned and he saw a tall, stately creature standing beside the Duchess. Her face was turned from him at that moment and he could only see the flashing of diamonds amid the jetty coils of her hair and around her throat. With an unconscious movement he advanced nearer. She turned at that moment and he saw her face. Was it beautiful? He would have been at a loss to tell, yet it pleased him at first sight, and, deeply as he loved his wife, he felt that his friend was right—that there might be many beautiful women, but only one Lady Hilton.

After her self-possessed greeting of her hostess, Lady Hilton accepted the Duc's arm and together they made a tour of the parlors. With the slow grace that characterized all her movements, she would bow recognition to her old acquaintances, pause for a few minutes to chat with this one, or address a smiling remark to another.

"You do not know, Duc," she said, "how good it is to get back to my France after these eight years of absence. I feel so much more at home here than I do elsewhere."

"Yes, if I am not mistaken," remarked the Duke, "you are of Spanish birth."

"Yes, both my parents and myself are Spanish, still it was when for the first time I saw France that I felt at home. You see, we Jews have no country we call our own, and we adopt that in which we live. For instance, you never hear a Jew say that he is French or German; he simply says, 'I am a French or a German Jew.' So, using the privilege of my race, I have adopted France as my country."

"France, in the persons of her inhabitants, is highly sensible of the honor you do her," was the gallant reply.

"I am tired of being flattered, and I hope that you at least will take pity on my weary nerves," laughed his companion. "Besides, as I believe in the transmigration of souls, I think that I must be the mortal image of some French lass——"

"Say queen, Lady Judith, and I will let you continue."

"Oh, you are incorrigible, for in spite of my prayer you are again making use of flattery. To change the subject, could you tell me who is that gentleman over yonder? He is making such desperate love to his companion that my curiosity has been aroused."

The Duc de La Motte looked at the group signaled by Lady Hilton and smiled as he replied:

"It is the Marquis du Terrail, and the lady is his wife."

"His wife!" with a lifting of the arched brows. "I never would have thought so, for it is not often that husbands waste so much attention on their wives."

"Du Terrail is so desperately in love with his wife that he is making himself ridiculous by his constant attentions to the Marquise. For him there is but one woman in the world, and that woman is his wife."

A slight frown passed over Lady Judith's smooth brow. She, who had the universal admiration of all, felt childishly jealous of this woman who had so well enslaved one man. And with a somewhat disdainful smile she said:

"I should like to meet this unique species of husband. Will you introduce me?"

"Certainly."

When Pierre du Terrail saw the Duke advance toward him, he hastened to rise and began an embarrassed excuse for being caught alone with his wife.

"There, don't excuse yourself, du Terrail," interrupted the Duke with a smile. "It would be better if every man would make love to his own wife instead of to those of other men." This was more addressed to a young man who, at that moment, had advanced to claim Marie's hand for the waltz. He was the most advanced of her admirers, though he was married to one of the most charming women in Paris. But forbidden fruit is the only attractive kind to some natures and he neglected his own wife to pay a desperate court to the young Marquise.

When the Marquise du Terrail and her partner had walked away in the direction of the ballroom, the Duke turned to Pierre, saying:

"Come, du Terrail, you are wanted. Lady Hilton desires to meet you."

The Marquis followed the Duke and soon he was bowing before Lady Hilton. She greeted him with her usual grace of manner and offered him a seat by her side. Then with the ease of a well-informed woman she began the conversation, speaking first of one subject, then another, fluttering from theme to theme with the gay rapidity of the butterfly who pauses on each flower just long enough to draw the sweetest honey.

Du Terrail was charmed by her brilliant intellect, and during the half hour he spent by her side he forgot that she was a beautiful woman, and remembered only that she was a clever one. When at last he rose to take his leave she said to him:

"I am home every Friday evening, and I should be pleased if you would come with Madame du Terrail. I should so like to meet her."

Du Terrail cast on Lady Hilton a grateful look, which showed her that by that simple invitation to his wife she had pleased him more than by her beauty and her witty conversation.

Time passed, and winter having given place to spring, the Marquis and the Marquise du Terrail sent out invitations to a large number of their friends to spend the summer months with them at the Castle near Chalons. And when it became known that Lady Hilton had already accepted, all were eager to attend also.

When we again see the Castle a year has passed since Marie told to Irene the tragic story of the ghosts which peopled the western wing. The night is as fairylike as then, the air warm, the moon shining down upon the whole, and two persons are walking down the graveled walk, but this time it is a man and a woman, the Marquis du Terrail and Lady Judith Hilton. In her soft, caressing voice, Judith broke the silence which had lasted for some time.

"How beautiful the night is, and how the moon's bright rays pale the luster of the stars!"

"Your remark is correct, Lady Judith, and it applies to your beauty as well as to that of the moon, since your dazzling charms cause other women to sink into insignificance."

She looked up with a startled glance, for that compliment, coming from this loverlike husband, surprised, yet pleased, her. Still, as she saw his face, its cold, calm lines denoted that what he had just said had been from a host's desire to please a guest. Judith bit her lips, for this man baffled her. She had been spoiled by her successes, and his indifference wounded her pride, almost touched her heart. She gave a slight shiver, more of nervousness than of cold.

"We had better return to the Castle, Marquis, the night air is chilly."

"What!" he said somewhat regretfully. "Do you wish to return so soon? It is so seldom that one has a few moments' tete-a-tete with you, Lady Judith, that time seems to fly in your presence."

"Again she looked up and again she saw the same calm face of a man who says pleasant things that he may not be accused of impoliteness. For a few moments some secret emotion kept Judith silent. Her bosom rose and fell in rapid throbbings, her dark eyes were filled with a nameless pain. But with a powerful effort she recovered herself and with her gayest laugh, said:

"Really, it is time for us to return, since you have within the last minute made me two compliments, and as this is something unusual for you, I fear that there must be something in the night air which is affecting your brain. But, joking aside, I am tired and cold."

The return to the castle was made in silence. That evening Lady Hilton surprised all her friends by the feverish gaiety of her manner, and the unusual sarcasm of her wit. Even her gestures lost their slow languor and became brisk and uneven, while her voice had the quick, nervous accents of one laboring under a new and powerful excitement.

It was only when Judith found herself alone that night, after having dismissed her maid, that the mask of happiness dropped from her face and in her rich gown she threw herself on the bed and burst into tears.

What could be the cause of her misery? Had she not all a woman could wish, youth, beauty, wealth? What need she more? Alas! she wanted love, and that one thing had never been hers. Married at nineteen, widowed at twenty, petted, flattered, but never loved—such, in a few words, is the history of the sobbing woman. Until tonight this lack of love had not made itself felt, but the indifferent look of one man had fanned into play all the passion of her sleeping heart, and Lady Hilton realized with boundless terror that she loved the Marquis du Terrail.

Oh, how it humbled her pride and called the flush of shame to her cheeks to think that of all men she had given her heart to one who did not care for it! And he was married—married to a woman he loved! She sprang to her feet at this last thought, and like a caged tigress paced the room.

"Ah, I shall kill you, shameless love, be it necessary to silence forever the heart which nurses you! Either you or I must die, for Judith Hilton is not the woman to support the shame of loving one who does not return that love. The Judith of old killed the enemy of her people; the modern Judith will kill the enemy of her peace of mind, if to do this she must first crush herself."

CHAPTER VI.

IRENE'S LOVER.

Irene had insisted upon spending the summer at Camp de Chalons. Raoul, fearing she would find the camp dull after the gay season spent in Paris, had urged her to spend part of the warm months at the country homes of some of her friends, who had asked her to form one of the house party they were arranging for the summer. But she had refused, and with grieved tones had asked her brother:

"Have you ceased to love me, Raoul, that you thus wish to chase me from your side?"

"Ceased to love you, my Irene!" he had interrupted with emotion. "You surely do not believe such a thing, for I will cease to live before I cease to love you. But, darling, as I told you when I forced you to go to Paris for the winter, I must think of your future."

"And I," she interrupted in return, "must repeat that going to Paris or to the country homes of my titled friends will have nothing to do with my future, since not one of those dudish idiots I meet in the world pleases my fancy, far less touches my heart. And when I marry I am going to love my husband. I want to marry a soldier, a man like you, if there are any left, a man who is not afraid to die; who is noble, frank, generous, manly. Now, if I find some one like that, be he your man Jean, or the general-in-chief of the French army, I'll marry him if he wants me."

Raoul smiled, and as Irene's plan suited his secret desires, he let her have her way.

After the return to camp Irene's life was full of happiness. Every morning, on her mare Lula, she would take long rides over the country; in the afternoon she either would visit the sick soldiers at the hospital, or take endless walks along "the Marne," sometimes with Raoul, sometimes alone.

She had been in camp about a month when, one hot afternoon, she appeared in her brother's study, dressed for a walk.

"Are you going with me, Raoul?"

Raoul looked up and a smile passed over his face at the sight of the rosy, smiling girl before him, who in her pink lawn dress appeared so fresh and inviting. He passed his hand over his heated brow and answered:

"You may go if you please, but my age must be telling upon me, since this heat leaves me without energy. I would rather accept an invitation to sleep."

She laughed and, kissing him, said:

"It isn't age which troubles you, Raoul—only laziness, and as one lazy person is enough in one family, I am going to walk for two."

With this she left him. As she passed the officers' mess a young man stepped out and, bowing, said:

"Are you out for a ramble, Mademoiselle Irene?"

Irene looked up, her mouth dimpled with smiles:

"Yes; and you, Lieutenant?"

"So am I, and if you will accept my company I should consider it a great honor," he answered somewhat timidly.

"Why, certainly, I should be delighted, for I don't like being alone."

They walked on together, Irene as gay and unconcerned as ever, little guessing what this afternoon held in reserve for her and how it was to change all her future life and bring to her heart its first throbbing of passion.

Since the first time Lieutenant Lepage had seen Irene as she held her reception at the soldiers' mess, he had been unable to chase her image from his mind. From his brother officers he had heard the history of her education, and if he wondered at the unusual candor of her manner at their first meeting, it was explained to him by her early training.

From that day the young man had often met Irene, for Raoul, ever willing to please his sister, had made friends with the young lieutenant and often invited him to spend the evening with them.

The more he saw the young girl the deeper became his admiration, and the pleasant impression of the first days became the profound love of the future. It was only during her absence in Paris that Lieutenant Lepage discovered the real name of his sentiment for Irene. Then followed weeks of painful indecision, for Irene, to marry him, must descend in social rank. Being too honorable to seek to win her heart, and by that affection win her brother's consent, he went first to Raoul and told him of his love and the doubts this love had awakened. Raoul had laughed when he had spoken of his fears that Irene might not like to descend in the social scale.

"I see you have not yet understood my sister's character," had said the captain. "Irene is a radical, and titles in her eyes are the ill-fitting dresses that cover the insignificance of the majority of their owners. Why, let her fall in love with the most lowly of my men and she will marry him without a moment's hesitation."

"But would you allow her to do so?" objected the surprised young man.

Raoul's lips parted in one of his rare smiles as he said:

"Allow it? Why, my dear boy, have you ever heard of a slave refusing to obey the orders of a master? Well, I am Irene's most servile slave; she rules my life and heart as no other woman has done, or ever shall. Often I wish to make some remark on her conduct which seems too free as she becomes older, but the reproach always ends in a kiss of approval of what I, nevertheless, know to be incorrect. She is a witch, and she knows how to force me to do her bidding. Her will is law; therefore, do you suppose that I could find the courage to say 'No' to a marriage on which she had set her heart?

"Knowing my weakness and Irene's eccentricity, I have kept her as far away from camp as possible, for fear that her heart in speaking would force her to commit the mistake of marrying too far below her."

With an affectionate gesture he tapped the young man on the shoulder as he continued:

"But I approve your suit, Lepage. Your name may not be of noble descent, but your soul is generous, your life honorable, your intelligence is such that 'Advancement' is written on the blank book of the future. You are rich, but, were it not so, I could be rich enough for two. Yes, Armand, nothing could make me happier than to give my sister into your keeping, so try to win her love, and remember if the task is difficult that the reward will be well worth the struggle, for the heart which is hardest to win is the one that when won is the most faithful."

Thus encouraged, Armand Lepage had set to work to win Irene's affections, and she, without understanding the new feeling, soon learned to look forward with keen pleasure to the young man's visits and felt a great delight when he accompanied her on her walks.

Today her pleasure was more evident than ever, and Armand, who had been seeking an opportunity to open fire, as his soldiers would have termed it, decided that he would know his fate that very day.

As they walked along the shady course of the Marne, Irene did most of the talking, since the young man was somewhat puzzled how to make love to this unusual girl. With her he knew it would not do to follow the usual course followed by lovers, and in trying to invent a new way he almost became impolite.

At last Irene felt tired, and she took a seat on a fallen tree; as she took her hat off and let the breezes play with her hair, she said:

"Let us rest, for the heat is such that this short walk has tired me."

He took a seat on the grass at her feet. She was so alluringly pretty in her fresh summer toilet, with the flush that heat had brought to her cheeks that the young man's heart beat more rapidly. Besides, she was looking down at him with a world of unconscious love in her eyes. Suddenly she said:

"Do you remember the day when I met you for the first time?"

Lieutenant Lepage felt that the moment had arrived for him to speak, so he answered:

"How could I forget it, Mademoiselle, since from that day my heart has been yours? I have loved you since then, and these many months I have been silent, afraid to ask you for so great a treasure as yourself. But today I must speak—I must ask you to allow me to win your hand as my bride."

He paused, for Irene was a picture of the most profound astonishment. An offer of marriage to her, and coming from the most fastidious man of the regiment! For a few moments she remained in this manner, then all at once the grave lines of her face relaxed and she began to laugh.

"It is too comical!" she said at last; "the idea of any one loving me, of wishing to marry the boy-girl, who, as the Duchess says, never does anything correctly, but is always getting into trouble. If I did not know you so well I would take you for a madman, as no one in his senses would care to marry such a madcap as I, the naughty, mischievous girl who can't be good five minutes at a time."

Armand was too much in earnest to even smile at this outburst, but, seizing one of her hands in his, said gravely:

"Do not laugh at my love, Mademoiselle Irene, for it is the future happiness of my life that is being decided today. You have just remarked that your conduct is unusual; well, were it anything but what it is I would not be here humbly begging to have the right to be your slave."

She laughed again, but this time a new and powerful emotion clouded the silvery ring of the tones, and she said:

"Really, Lieutenant, you are hard to please. You make me an offer of marriage, and when I laugh because I am so glad, you feel grieved. Maybe you would have desired me to burst into tears as though some terrible misfortune were about to befall me."

"Irene, tell me, is it so—can it be possible that you love me a little—that you accept my offer—that you consent to become my wife?"

A hot blush had deepened the color of her cheeks, but the lips smiled on and the eyes, brilliant with happiness, still met his in an answering look of love.

"You need not be so anxious to know your fate, for let me tell you that there will be nothing very attractive in your lot. You see, Raoul has spoiled me and I will expect you to do the same. You will have to obey me as blindly as he does and never scold me if I do anything wrong. See how honest I am, for it would have been very easy for me to let you discover all this after marriage! Still, if you wish to know my answer, I think I can accept the charge of being your master, if you consent to play the role of slave—no husband."

These playful words would have seemed childish had not the tone of the voice revealed the deeper emotion which tried to veil itself in careless gaiety.

"Irene, my own Irene, how can I express my joy! Mere words cannot paint my feelings, and it will only be years of devotion which can prove it."

Irene was thoughtful now, and as she took her hand from his warm clasp she said:

"What will Raoul think when he hears that some one besides himself has learned to love me! He surely will be surprised."

And rising she continued: "I have never had a secret from Raoul, and I will not be perfectly happy until I have told him of our interview."

"Let us not go yet, Irene," he pleaded, "for you have yet to tell me how long I must wait until I call you mine."

She resumed her seat on the fallen tree and very gravely said:

"That is something I can't tell. I have promised to marry you, that is true, but I can't fix the date, since I must find a wife for my brother before I can think of marriage myself. In his youth he sacrificed his happiness for my sake; it is my turn now. I cannot leave him unless it be in the keeping of some noble woman who will take my place. He remained by my side when I was a helpless infant; I must not leave him now that the vigor of youth is leaving him."

"But if he should never marry!" cried Armand, alarmed by her words.

"Well," she answered with a laugh, "if you still love me you will keep him company as an unmarried man. But, there, don't be frightened. I am going to hunt him a wife at once, and when she's found I'll have Raoul marry her."

"But if he refuses?"

"Ah! I see I have much to teach you, for when I tell Raoul he must marry, he will no more think of refusing than you would if you had lived as long as he has. Besides, if he objected I would only have to tell him that I will not marry until he does, and to make me happy he will make himself happy too. But now it really is time to return to camp."

The walk back was somewhat silent, and though their bliss took from them the power of speech, their hearts spoke to each other, and their eyes repeated the old story which, since the world began, has brought to the monotony of existence the one cheering ray which gives to the soul a foresight of Heaven.

CHAPTER VII.

THE WEB TIGHTENS.

During the summer months Marie found but little rest, for their house party was large, and the guests from the neighboring castles were often invited to spend a few days at the Castle du Terrail, so that the unhealthy excitement of the winter was continued throughout the warm months.

Irene had refused to spend the summer with the Marquise. She preferred the calm of their villa and the closer proximity to her soldiers, since the Castle was some ten miles from camp. Marie thus found herself without the support of that sincere friend's presence, but as a compensation the Duke and the Duchess de La Motte had consented that their daughter, Marguerite, should accept Marie's invitation, and in consoling the young girl's unhappy love she found a little ease for the unrest of her own soul. Besides, the planning for the secret meetings between the lovers gave to her mind the needed stimulant to save it from brooding too much on her own disappointed love.

Whenever she knew that Lucien de Lorgnac was to visit the castle she arranged some excursion that would take her other guests away, and at the last minute would pretend a sudden indisposition, and Marguerite would offer to remain to keep her company.

Today all the guests had departed on a coaching party, and Marie and Marguerite were alone. For about the hundredth time in the last half hour Marie had gone to the window, saying each time she resumed her seat:

"How long he is in coming today! Maybe he will not come."

Marguerite, though equally as anxious as her companion, nevertheless tried to control her impatience and answered:

"He must be detained against his will, for he knows how short are our stolen interviews. Oh, how I will suffer to be thus forced to hide my love, to meet in secret the one whom I long to proclaim to the world as the chosen one of my heart!"

The girl who spoke these bitter words was little more than a child, scarcely eighteen, and her form still retained that fugitive grace of manner which marks the delicate transformation of adolescence; that strange mingling of twilight and dawn, the beginning of the woman in the end of the child.

Though Marguerite could not have been classed a beauty, there was about her the captivating charm of a gentle soul and a fond heart. Her large gray eyes reflected the candor of innocence; the smooth, white brow, with its crown of auburn hair, spoke of elevated thoughts, while the rather large mouth was soon forgotten in the sweetness of its smile.

"Have you hoped that your father will relent?" asked Marie.

"None, since he has determined that I shall marry a distant cousin of ours, the Baron Henri de Treves, but that is something I will never consent to do, and if I cannot marry the man I love, I will remain Marguerite de La Motte the rest of my life."

A sad smile passed over Marie's lips, and as with a tender motion she stroked her companion's hand, she said:

"Alas! Marguerite, you are too young to pronounce the word 'Never,' for what is your will compared to that of your father? Many women before you, in the first throbbing of passion, have sworn that never would they give in, but the workings of fate, the fatigue of ceaseless struggles, in weakening their strength conquers their will. You think you can never forget your present love; you take your notion of life from the novels you have read, but in after years, like me, you will see that very rarely do we walk life's road by the side of the man who was the first to wake our hearts to the sweetness of love."

She had talked on, hurriedly, without noticing the look of surprise which had come over her listener's face, and when she did become conscious of it she paused abruptly and, rising, walked three or four times about the room; then standing before Marguerite said:

"Pardon me if my words have wounded you by doubting the sincerity of your love, but I thought it my duty to speak them, for sometimes the future frightens me and my heart is tortured with the doubt that perhaps I am not acting for the best in humoring your desires now, thus preparing for you a bitterer future."

Marguerite would have replied, but at this moment a servant anonunced:

"The Vicomte de Lorgnac."

Marie hastened to greet her guest, who was entering at this moment. He was a man of some thirty years, with the effeminate grace of a worn-out race. Extending her hand, the Marquise said, as a sudden brightness stole over her face:

"Not very loverlike of you, Vicomte, to make your ladylove wait for you."

He took her hand and looking at her with deep affection in his eyes said:

"I could not get away sooner. But, Madame du Terrail, how will I ever be able to thank you for these moments of stolen bliss which we owe to your kindness?"

With these words he went and took a seat beside Marguerite, and with her hands in his, he renewed the passionate protests of undying love which he made every time he came.

Marie watched them for a few moments; then something in their happiness, fugitive though it was, struck a painful chord in her heart, and she envied, as only a lonely woman can envy, Marguerite's stolen bliss. Fearing they might guess the feelings which filled her soul with a new alarm, she hastily left the room.

When she returned half an hour later nothing in her face betrayed the poignant emotion that was torturing her heart; yet during those thirty minutes a great change had come over the Marquise du Terrail.

"Come," she said almost gaily, "much as I regret to disturb your happiness, we must not forget that the coaching party will soon return, and it is better for Marguerite's parents not to know of your visits, Vicomte."

He rose at once and, taking up his hat and gloves, said:

"Will you not come as far as the gate with me?"

"I will," answered Marie hastily, "but it is more prudent for Marguerite to remain at the Castle."

They left the drawing-room, and Marguerite from the window watched them descend the shady avenue, Lucien de Lorgnac leading his horse by the bridle. When she could see them no longer the young girl sank on a chair, murmuring:

"Oh, God, pardon me! I feel that these secret meetings are wrong, but my love makes me so weak that I am powerless to resist."

When the coaching party returned an hour later they found Madame du Terrail and de Lorgnac still standing by the gate. The Marquis invited the young man to return to the Castle with them, but he declined, and, mounting his horse, had soon disappeared down the road. Marie was given a place on the coach, and turning at once to her husband, said, to explain her presence at the gate:

"I had come to meet you, when Monsieur de Lorgnac passed by and of course he stopped to speak to me."

"And Mademoiselle de La Motte—what has become of her?" he asked.

Marie's cheeks were crimson, yet she answered calmly:

"Marguerite is in the library reading a novel, and she refused to come with me."

Nothing was said after this, only on several faces dawned a scornful smile; it was evident that very few believed a word of Marie's explanations.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MISSING HOSTESS.

The hunting season was drawing to a close, and Pierre du Terrail, wishing to end the summer gaiety by a large ball at the Castle, had issued many invitations, most of which had been accepted. Marie had written a personal note to Irene, saying:

"Come, Irene, I have need of your presence, for in spite of my envied position I am more miserable than the poorest beggar on the roadside. Come, for my overburdened heart needs some one in whom to confide, and you are the only friend who could understand my feelings. I had hopes that you would have come often to see me, but though we were only ten miles distant you have so far forgotten me that our meetings have been as though millions of miles separated us. Don't think I say this as a reproach, for I well understand how much more you prefer your happy life than my dwarfed one. Still, Irene, you must come now, for I need you—I need your advice, I need to refresh my weakness in the superabundance of your strength."

Thus appealed to, Irene promised to attend the ball. She felt somewhat remorseful that she had so neglected her friend during the summer months, having been at the castle but twice during the stay of the regiment at Camp de Chalons. Now they had returned to winter quarters, and she felt it was her duty to leave for a while her beloved soldiers and her happy life to hasten to the side of her unhappy friend.

On the appointed day, Irene arrived by an early evening train, hoping to see Marie before the other guests arrived. In this she was disappointed, for du Terrail met her on the terrace and conducted her into the dining-room, where those of the ladies who were not dining in their rooms were assembled to take a light lunch before dressing for the ball.

"I am sorry that Madame la Marquise has already gone to her apartment to take a few hours' rest before night. She would have been so glad to have seen you, but her head ached, so I brought her a light lunch and compelled her to lie down. She was just falling asleep when I left her."

Irene loked up with a disappointed pout, and said:

"That means that my arrival must not be announced. I am sorry, for I had hoped that I could see Marie before her role as hostess would impose her duties upon her."

"I am certain Madame du Terrail will share your regrets, but as I have already stated she is in need of rest," and, changing the subject, he continued: "You must excuse me, but the crowded state of the castle tonight has forced us to give you a room in common with Mademoiselle de La Motte. Madame du Terrail felt sure that you would not object to the arrangement."

"Certainly not. Where is Marguerite?"

"In her room, I believe."

"Then I should like to be shown there at once."

Du Terrail rang a bell and while she waited for the servant to appear Irene greeted the persons assembled in the dining-room. A few minutes later she was clasping Marguerite in her arms.

"How glad I am that Marie thought of putting us together!" Irene cried, after the first greetings were over and she had taken off her wraps. "Ah! I suppose that I'm to sleep in the boudoir, judging from that bed I see yonder."

She was so full of exuberant joy that the momentary disappointment of not seeing Marie had disappeared, and she was herself again. Taking a seat by the bright fire which October's frosts had forced to be lighted, she continued, not noticing the rather mournful aspect of her companion's face:

"While I wait for my valise to be brought up we can talk, for we have some three hours before it is time to descend to the ballroom."

At that moment, after a timid knock at the doro, a servant entered bearing a platter.

"Monsieur le Marquis thought you ladies would like to dine in your room tonight," he said. "If you desire anything you will have but to ring," and he left them.

An impatient frown gathered on Irene's brow, and turning to her friend as they began to eat, she said:

"Have you seen Marie this afternoon?"

"Yes, I took a walk with her in the park after lunch. I left her when Monsieur du Terrail insisted that she should return to her room and rest, as she loked so pale and nervous."

"Did she really?"

"Yes, I never saw her so excited as today. She talked continually in brisk, uneven tones, her cheeks were flushed, her eyes, brilliant with fever, were almost wet with tears. Though her husband does not realize it, Marie is wasting away, from what cause I cannot tell for sure, but from certain actions I fear it is because she hates her husband and his presence is slowly killing her."

Irene was gazing thoughtfully at the fire; for a while she was silent, then, looking up, she said:

"I can't blame her, Marguerite, for in my opinion such a man as the Marquis du Terrail could not have won my heart."

"Why?" asked her companion in surprise. "He is handsome, cultured, and he loves her so much."

Irene shrugged her shoulders as she replied:

"It is this very love that would disgust me, for I could not stand his constant and cringing attentions. I want a man who can be a master, whose love, though sincere, is not so effeminate as to make him abjectly servile. No, these passionate natures are not the style I admire."

A smile came over her lips, and with heightening color she continued:

"I have a secret to tell you, Marguerite. I am engaged. Are you not surprised?"

"Not in the least, since your sweet, frank nature was destined some day to win a noble man's heart. Who is the happy man?"

"The public announcement is not to be made for some time to come, but I am to marry Lieutenant Armand Lepage, one of the officers of my brother's regiment."

"Lepage?" repeated Marguerite. "I do not know him, do I?"

"No, for he left the military school to enter the regiment and has not mixed with society. He is a distant kin to the Comte de Granville, but the Comte has three sons and some half a dozen nephews, so there is not the least hope that Armand will ever come into the title. But that to me is of secondary importance, since all I want is to marry a soldier, and Armand is a true soldier."

Marguerite gazed at her friend in wonder, for Irene's face was transfigured, illuminated as it was by the sublimity of her bliss. Seeing her friend's surprise, Irene laughed as she said:

"You are astonished, Marguerite, to see how completely my wayward fancy has been captured, but you could not be more surprised than I. It has always seemed to me that never would I love any man as women do, but time has proved to me the folly of that thought."

And with a smile she added more to herself than to her companion:

"It is so sweet to love and to be loved."

A cloud of sorrow passed over Marguerite's face as she answered:

"It is sometimes very bitter."

Irene was going to answer when a servant entered with her valise, and, looking at the clock, the two girls saw that they had just time to dress.

When they descended into the drawing-room they were startled to see that the Marquis du Terrail stood alone to receive the guests. Irene asked anxiously:

"And Marie—where is she?"

"She has not yet descended; her toilet this evening seems to take her longer than usual."

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Du Terrail's face became pale and his voice trembled as he said:

"You surely don't suppose that she might be sick. I will send a servant to inquire."

While the servant was carrying out the order, Pierre continued the conversation with the two girls, but he was suddenly interrupted by the return of the valet. His face was white and frightened, and his voice trembled as he said:

"Monsieur le Marquis, Madame la Marquise is not in her room nor anywhere in the house. She sent her maid away early in the afternoon with orders not to disturb her. She became alarmed when Madame la Marquise did not call her, but it was only when I carried out your order that she dared enter the room to find it empty."

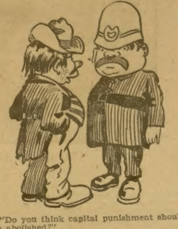
Ru Terrail staggered as if struck a deadly blow, and cast around him a wild look of fright. But the sight of Irene's frightened face seemed to quiet his own terror, for he said with assumed calm:

"She must be playing some schoolgirl's trick; we are such lovers yet. I will go and find her if you will kindly take my place to receive the guests."

And without waiting for a reply, du Terrail rushed upstairs to his wife's apartment.

In the Ledger of next week another installment of this charming story will appear. With each subscription to the Ledger we give a free camera or patterns as advertised on pages thirteen and fifteen.

Faithful to Traditions.



"Do you think capital punishment should be abolished?"

"No, sir; capital punishment was good enough for my ancestors and it's good enough for me."

If You Want to Be Loved,

Don't contradict people, even if you're sure you are right.

Don't be inquisitive about the affairs of even your most intimate friend.

Don't underrate anything because you don't possess it.

Don't believe that everybody else in the world is happier than you are.

Don't conclude that you have never had any opportunities in life.

From Bad to Worse.

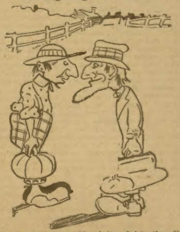
Gyer—I hear there is to be another postal investigation.

Myer—What's the matter now?

Gyer—It is reported that a man in one branch of the department had a chance to acquire a few extra dollars and didn't.

If many a so-called great man could come back to earth and glance over his own biography undoubtedly it would surprise him more than any one else.

His Fighting Blood Up.



Hiram Hobnails—Ye ain't goin' to the city, Caleb?

Caleb Ketchum—Yes I be. I've been savin' all the lead dollars, plugged nickels, an' tin dimes thet have been passed onter me fer years; an' now I'm in fer business.

Between Friends.

Swiggs—Say, that fellow Bifkins called me an old soak. What would you advise me to do about it?

Briggs—Nothing. Had he called you a new soak you might have brought suit for defamation of character.

Time Works Wonders.

Sentimental Sue—Only last season Maud declared she wouldn't marry a man unless he was a hero.

Tantalizing Tess—Yes, but she has outgrown that sentiment. She's looking for an old fool with money, this season.

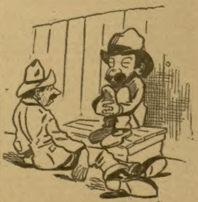
Force of Habit.

Gunner—That man must be used to trading in horses.

Guyer—Why so?

Gunner—When he asked how old the automobile was he looked inside for its teeth.

A Logical Conclusion.



First Burglar—Say, pal, is there any jail in this town?

Second Burglar—Guess not. I've been here ten days and——

First Burglar—Then there ain't any. If there was, you'd be in it sure by this time.

IN MASQUERADE;

OR

THE LUCK OF A FREE LANCE.

BY WILLIAM R. EYSTER.

[Copyright by W. D. Boyce Co.]

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CHAPTER XII.

AFLOAT AND ALONE.

It has been my good fortune more than once to say precisely the right thing without the least idea of how soon circumstances would show its appropriateness. When I introduced Whetstone's name it was on the spur of the moment. A second before I had forgotten all about his existence. Now, his sudden appearance was sufficient extenuation. Mrs. Marchmont barely had time to regain calmness when the man was by her side.

By the turn of his head I could see he cast a glance at me, but his address was directly to her.

"I think we meet on neutral grounds, at the least. Back in New York, to a certain extent, you had the advantage. There is no telling what risks a woman will take, and if your knowledge was as great as your intentions were good you might have made no end of trouble for me, without altering our relations a whit. Here, I think, it will be a fair game, with the advantages on my side. I might possibly have remained in the shade a trifle longer had it not been for meeting with this—gentleman. I knew he would report my presence. Thank Heaven, we are going to a land where it will not be difficult to even up my obligations to him without any special danger to myself! Meantime, I warn you. If you continue your relations I shall feel compelled to shoot him on opportunity, and allow the other passengers of the Panama to see what jealous wrath can do."

It all tripped off his tongue as though his presence were desirable and his footing familiar. After the several interviews I had held with him his coolness was refreshing, but he had a certain advantage he was not afraid to use to the limit. As being the husband of the lady he could not be summarily disposed of except under circumstances clearly the most justifiable; whilst I could see myself that if I was to retain my present cast of character he might make a strong plea in behalf of himself. Nevertheless, I could be as cool.

"Me dear sir," I began confidentially, "av Oi wor undershtandin' the quistion, you pretend to a claim on this leddy which she does not care to allow. At the same time, she is willing to tr'ate ye with most distinguished consideration. Av ye are woise ye will accipt the situation. For the future, Oi would inform ye that a jintlemon be the name av Beamish—a New York detective av renown—wor aware av the fact av yer intendid escape by the Panama, an' will no doubt have arranged for your reciption at the ind av the journey. Your d'alin's wid him moight be onder a differint name, but the principle wad be the same. Soilince on both soides might be a bargain wid all the advantages for you. Av Oi am forced to shpake it's loikely you'll have an ilegant chance to rot in jail."

It will be remembered, Beamish told me he had been making some investigations in regard to the passenger list of the Panama. After that, the rest was all guesswork; though I must have hit the nail fairly well on the head.

"A detective!" he exclaimed. "By God! I might have suspected it—though I can't see what your game has been.

"At any rate, your authority is no good here, and at the end of the journey you may find the boot on the other foot. A detective! That explains it in part; but for the life of me I cannot see through it all yet."

"Maybe av ye looked through the bracelets ye could comprehind it betther. Did yez say Oi should clap thim on before the toime?"

I dropped my hand in my pocket rather fiercely, though it rested on a pistol rather than handcuffs. I did not know how soon he might make good his threat of trying to shoot. At the first suspicious movement on his part it is likely I would have dropped him.

"A detective!" he laughed once more, evidently in altogether a different mood. "That complicates matters a bit, but I think I can see my way clear. Good-night, my dear. I will probably see you later. A detective! Pshaw! I might have known."

He walked away jauntily, leaving Mrs. Marchmont to stare at me with uncertain gaze. I saw she was hurt, even before she spoke.

"Can this be true?" she asked, showing her surprise. "If so, you have deceived me finely."

"Oi plidge ye me worrud that so far as being a detective there is not a worrud av truth in the charge; but av the protiction av Major O'Rourke wad be an objict it moight be as will to l'ave him in the delusion. It cuts the n'ate little plan av his in two in the middle, an' Oi'll foind some m'anes to dispose av him before the voyage is over. The information concernin' Mr. B'amish wor resaved quoite insoydintal, though a fri'nd he is mine, all the same."

"If you only were a detective—some one with authority to take him in hand! The man has some dangerous scheme in view. If I could get safely to Cortez I would not fear him; but there are other stops before that. Should I once fall into his hands who can tell what may happen? He would risk life and soul for half the wealth he thinks he sees in the hazard."

Low though she spoke, I could see how desperately she was in earnest; and this trouble of the lady seemed to have a singular effect on me. It brought back much of that fascination which had attracted me at the time of our first meeting. I was always susceptible to the charms of beauty in distress; but at that moment I felt that if it would place Mrs. Marchmont beyond danger I would cheerfully run strong chance of dying for her. I was silent a moment before answering:

"For your sake Oi could wish Oi wor a detective, or onnything ilse to do ye good. Oi have always been a mon av proper proclivities, an' niver to this day, onliss in honist warfare, did Oi kill a mon widout fair warnin', an' a w'apin in his fisht, but av there's no other way Oi swear to yez Oi'll shtroike him down regardliss."

"No, no! I dare not ask my salvation at any such price."

"It's not the askin' Oi n'ade; it's simply permission. Wid that Oi'll do the rist."

"What! Not knowing more of the true inwardness of the matter, could you blindly serve me, never asking a question as to why I am forced to fear this villain who claims to have the right to call himself my husband, and then go away and forget that we had met? And you a young man, whilst I am old enough to be your mother!"

"It's the way Oi am built," I answered simply. "Oi don't wish to inthrude, but av ye calls on me I'll do all that; an' more. An' for age—a sw'ate woman has none at all; an' afther yer d'id for her, a year or so wan way or the other makes no differince. War an' women—Oi am their humble admoirer, for principle and not for profit."

I spoke rapidly and probably with feeling. Mrs. Marchmont answered promptly:

"I am not given to placing utter trust in a stranger, but your words do not sound like an empty boast, and they give me courage. You must not—you really must not—interfere save at the last extremity, and when I shall have called upon you. Till then I am glad to know that you are my friend."

Miss Lorena took no part in the conversation. I was not sure, even, that she listened. She stood a little way off, her face turned seaward, in the position taken when Whetstone left us. From her attitude I augured she had her own opinion about me and my offers of service. She did indeed say good-night, when, a little later, we parted again, but it was in a cold and formal way. I was exasperated rather than hurt, and muttered to myself:

"Very well, my young lady. You do not take kindly to Major O'Rourke—how would it do to have Algernon Mount Morris dawn on your sight? I suspect he would be more to your liking. If you have really set yourself against the commander of the 'Irregulars' there will be slim chance to get within stone throw of either of you. I may yet have to try something of the kind."

The difficulty in that scheme, which of a sudden had popped into my head, was the absence of a wardrobe. Such as I was I must remain until a more convenient season for change of cast. And before that I had three matters to attend to—Whetstone, the Honduras syndicate, and the revolution of Campos. Unless they all died natural deaths, there was trouble ahead from each and every one of them; but somehow this conversation ultimately gave me a buoyancy of feeling which carried me well above such trifles. When Campos came stumbling along in search of me I was half inclined to be annoyed, for I felt like communing further with my own thoughts. I laughed at him as he explained that he had discovered my absence and feared something had gone wrong Then I told him that probably the same unrest had been at work, not only with both of us, but with the Marchmonts as well.

"An' be me sowl," I added, "the widdy is a charmer. Av she wor a mite younger, or a score or so av years owlder, Oi'm not so sure Oi could resist the fascinations av her manner, or the power av her charms."

"Wouldn't blame you, my dear fellow; but better make sure before you try a cast in the dark. I am not so certain she is a widow at all, though such is the current opinion. There is something of a mystery about it, at all events."

I was getting warm now. At last I had found some one who could tell me something about Mrs. Marchmont—or that part of her life of which I most desired to know. Since Campos knew both her and Whetstone, it seemed to me he could give me some idea, or inkling of an idea, about the relations between them. Only an instinctive delicacy in speaking of her affairs kept me from asking a question which would have been a blunder indeed.

"Oi don't undershtand ye. She's niver been afther marryin' ag'in?"

"Oh, no. But though it is generally understood that she is a widow, I have never been satisfied that Marchmont is dead. Perhaps it is all unfounded suspicion; yet I really think if Baridos would speak he might enlighten us in the matter. All the same, for Heaven's sake don't hint anything of the kind to her!"

"And who may Baridos be?"

"President Baridos, of course—as great a villain as ever went unhung. That fellow you spoke to me about—Whetstone, you know—was one of his tools, though I believe they are at outs now. At least, he offered me to sell his master; and had I been able to place any confidence in him I confess I might at once have been open for a deal. I wanted to verify his information before going further; but I have the matter under consideration."

"Oi wouldn't thrust him. Be the same tokin, Oi wouldn't wonder av Baridos wor sayin' the same thing It's noine to wan there's a trap in it for the wan av ye. Till me the howl shtory. It s'ames loike it would be moighty interestin' hearin', an' av coourse it goes no farther."

"I suspect you are right. And yet I had a very straight account of how matters stood between him and Baridos. I will not deny I have counted some on the fellow's aid, though I meant to accept it in such shape as to make betrayal difficult. It is quite a history, involving the Marchmonts by the way; and it is too long to tell to-night. I am ready to retire again, and don't care to be roused up. It will all keep very comfortably."

I never was much of an early bird, anyhow; but Campos had not made up for lost time, even though we had slept a good share of the day. I let him go away without striving to hinder. Night, moonlight, the long, sliding surge through the waves, the gentle breeze—oh! confound it, I was as moonstruck as the maddest. And the worst of it was I didn't even yet know what it was all about. If I wanted straight adventure why did I not stick to Campos and his insurrection? If I wanted to play the sentimental what was the use of risking the garrotte, or a file of infantry and an early morning execution? I had never done as much thinking in my life in twice the time as I had done in the last few weeks; and the more I thought the less I could see ahead along the course I fancied I ought to be able to map out.

I had another cigar lit and was gazing out into the water, just as I had seen Lorena doing not long before—and from exactly the same station. I said to myself a crisis must come soon; and even while I said so the crisis was at hand, without finding me ready for it. I was seized in the stiffest gripe I had ever felt, there was a twirl in the air, I felt something like a red-hot iron searing my breast, and then I was silently flung far out from the steamer.

Of course, at the first I went down like a stone, and it was lucky I had been too surprised to open my mouth for an outcry. I had been stabbed also, but how badly I did not then consider. In fact, it was some time after before I thought about it at all. When my head bobbed up again I was well back in the wake of the vessel, which was tearing along with perfect unconcern, not a soul on board appearing to have the least interest over the bit of jetsam which, in a little minute, was beyond sight or hearing from the deck of the Panama.

CHAPTER XIII.

BY MY DENTAL EPIDERMIS.

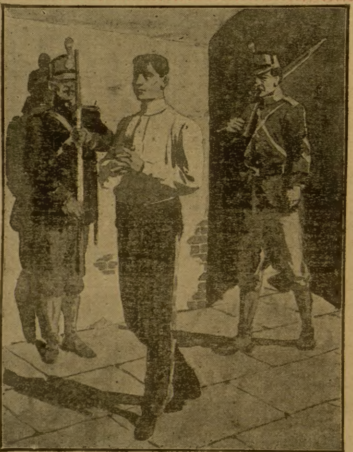
I have already said that when I left college I was as fairly finished an all-round athlete as you could well find. If there was any one place where I had always felt perfectly at home it was in the water.

The shock, which might have entirely dazed some men, simply restored my senses. It is true I had never been in such desperate strait before; but life was strong within me. Without flurry or immediate fear I reached out with a steady stroke, swimming toward the ship, though I knew well enough how futile that was unless the attention of some willing one on board had been or could be arrested. I did not waste any breath in sputter or squeak, but lifted my voice in a steady, clear halloo, which ought to have carried a mile through the night.

This I repeated at intervals, timed so as not to be exhaustive. I knew very well that at the best I would have half an hour in the water—even if a search for me was begun at once; it was possible the time would be much longer.

The Panama kept sullenly on. There was no change in her lights; nothing to show my voice had reached her. I took directions from the stars overhead and turned on my back, shouting as before, and swimming easily. What if they did not notice me at all? I had on slippers, which I quietly kicked off. I neither knew the exact direction of the nearest land, nor its distance, but I decided that if the Panama made no sign in the next five minutes I would veer off sharply and keep on swimming until I went under or brought up on something, whether it was a floating spar or a beach. As long as I kept my wits about me and the wind was low I knew I was good for two hours in the water, and how much more than that on a pinch was a problem I was ready to solve. At all events, I would never give up the ship. I took the time from my strokes, gave a shout at regular intervals, and swam for a full five minutes. By that time the Panama was more than a mile away, holding on her course, and unless Campos came a second time to the rescue, which was not likely, there was little chance I would be missed before morning. I turned at right angles in my course and struck out.

Soft starlight overhead, a fair breeze, warm waves, and the hour long past midnight! I thought of it all and tried to enjoy the steady lap-lap of the water as I surged along. Perhaps I was reminded now and then that man was mortal and had a latter end, but for the most part I tried meditation on anything and everything else.



"The time for the execution had come."

After what seemed to be hours I came to such strait I actually believe I did not think at all; but I never ceased to go forward. Sometimes on my back, sometimes breasting the waves, I kept on and on, through a night which seemed as though it was never going to end.

Suddenly there came a full realization of the position, and it flashed upon me I was making a losing fight for life. The strength oozed out of my arms, the breath was gone from my lungs, my head felt nigh to bursting and I could hear a flutter and boom of the heart which boded no good. At that moment I thought I was going to sink. Indeed, I believe I was already folding my arms with an impression the last bolt had been spent.

And then, plainly as could be, I heard a voice come over the water.

I gave a shout—a high, pitched, spluttering scream, rather—and at once heard an answering hail. Then a vessel of some sort loomed almost over me, with men looking down from her sides, though I could not see them.

Some one pitched me an oar.

It was a hit or miss toss, but I firmly believe that it was a miracle, and that it saved my life. The blade landed perhaps twenty feet away. How I came to find it I never knew, but in another moment I was a new man, feeling I could float another hour if need be. But without that oar I would have sunk long enough before the time when I was at last helped over the side by two stout sailors, who had to carry me to the cabin. The moment I felt sure I was really safe, the moment I felt the strong grasp of a human hand, I was like a rag.

An hour or two later I was asleep, having been rubbed, wriggled into a heavy flannel shirt, wrapped up in a rough way, and dosed with whisky that scorched the inside cuticle from throat-top to stomach.

Weak though I was while undergoing treatment I had my wits about me, and without saying a word understood a great deal more of what was whispered than I had credit for doing.

Although the men did the best they could for me, I managed at the very outset to understand my presence there was not a matter for thanksgiving. However, I was grateful enough for all of that, and if I did not express much thanks it was simply because I was worn out.

I don't know how long I slept, but it must have been for some hours. When I awoke it was with a start, and to find I was not as much the worse for my experience as I might have expected. I was stiff and sore from exertion; but I felt fairly strong and ready for a fresh wrestle with fate, if there was one on hand, as I more than half suspected. I had heard a sound I thought was familiar, and which brought me out of slumber and bunk at almost one and the same time. If I was not dreaming, or very widely mistaken, it was the report of a cannon.

I was all alone, and very probably forgotten. Fortunately, a light was burning in the cabin. My own few clothes were lying in a muddle, too wet to be called damp and too damp to be called dry. Perhaps if I had hunted around a little I might have found something else, but time was too precious for that. My belt was actually safe at my side, and I hurried into my pantaloons, drew on a pair of long, rubber boots two sizes too big for me, and without more ado made a rush for the deck.

There it was again—the searchlight of the Spanish cruiser, just as it had glared on the poor Alixis. At that moment, too, I noticed the vessel on which I stood was either at anchor or aground.

Only half a dozen men were on deck, and they were leaning over the bows, shouting. A glance around and I had taken in the situation.

We were in a landlocked little bay, and perhaps five hundred yards from the shore. A boat pretty well filled was pulling away, the rowers laying to their oars for dear life, having probably made half the distance; and the gleam of the searchlight was falling full upon them.

While I looked, there came another flash from the cruiser at the mouth of the bay, and a shell, hissing past our vessel, struck the water not a dozen yards from the boat.

At that, the rowers ceased to pull. I could see that some of them at least had dropped their oars, whilst two or three men went overboard and commenced to struggle toward the shore. This time, without a doubt, I had hit a simon-pure expedition; and I liked the look of things no more than I had done on the Alixis. I knew about what the chances of a man captured there would be.

I glanced toward the man-of-war. A launch was coming in at a great rate, followed by three or four boats; whilst another shell came shrieking along, aimed at our boat—and dropping not a mile away from it, either.

I made my way toward the knot of men at the bows. As I did so I saw three of them plunge overboard and swim for the shore. Scarcely thinking what I was doing I prepared to follow suit when a yell from one of the men remaining on board caused me to draw back. At the splash of the men dropping from the deck a three-cornered fin moved straight across the line of the searchlight, and a moment later there was the gleam of a white belly as a fourteen-foot shark turned for his prey. There was a scream from a man in the water; and that man—well, if I may be allowed to speak with seeming levity of such a matter, he was taken in and done for.

By this time the boat was moving again, and the men who had been stumbling toward the shore were wallowing forward at a great rate. It was all right for them since they had got into the shallow water and could keep up the liveliest kind of a splashing; but I felt as though I would rather risk a lodging at the Moro than jump into a bay full of sharks. And the way the cruiser's boat came on I had doubts whether one could make the shore a pistol shot ahead of them. I folded my arms—and did not have long to wait.

One of the boats dashed directly for us. The others—the launch leading—kept on shoreward, their crews shooting as they went. How many men dropped to their shots I never found out, nor had I time to wonder. There was a hail from the water; then the Spaniards came tumbling on board, their weapons ready to hack and to hew, to pistol and stab at the very shortestnotice.

They found neither reason nor occasion. I held up my hands after the fashion of an experienced Western traveler, exclaiming in Spanish, "I do not belong to this party; and all of us surrender."

When they had approached near enough, one of them promptly knocked me down with the flat of a saber, from which I judged he must be an officer. I might have made it an unwholesome performance for him; but to what profit? Of course, I would have been murdered on the spot.

I lay still and listened to the blows which felled my companions—which was the best thing I could do. There was also a large amount of audible swearing. Then the Spaniards were in full possession of the schooner.

Of course, I was triced up in no time, receiving numerous blows and various chokings; but I had my wits all about me, and was satisfied I was faring better than those who had got away in the boat. From the shore I could hear straggling shots, cries, shouts, and other indications that the boat's crews had not only landed but were getting in their work. After some little delay, while the steamer was being rummaged, I was transported to the deck of the cruiser. The greater part of the other prisoners did not come. They were dead.

Our arrival created plenty of excitement. I could understand the lingo fairly well, and had spoken Spanish when captured, but recognized I had made a mistake. In default of anything better I decided it best to return to my brogue.

I am afraid I looked a good deal of the desperado, with my red flannel shirt, pantaloons stuffed into the tops of big boots, hat gone, hair unkempt, and a general scowl on my face. It would have been more comfortable if the pantaloons, with the yellow cord running down the seams, had not been so unmistakably military in their appearance, and my true story accounting for my presence there had been a little more credible.

I expected to be catechized; and I was not mistaken. When I gave Considine O'Rourke as my name, and the United States as my residing place, the commander scowled more viciously than ever. When I attempted to tell my simple little narrative it was a narrow thing he did not run me through. A disclaimer of all knowledge of the vessel on which I was captured, of any acquaintance with her captain and crew, or privity of her intentions, was taken to be modeled after the historic utterances of Ananias, making me as well worthy of being struck dead. I was handcuffed, beaten, prodded, and banged around, and after being given to understand I would be taken to Havana for examination and subsequent execution, along with the other members of the expedition who were being captured on shore after an exhaustive fashion, I was locked up without having received any breakfast, and left to ruminate solely on the uncertainties of life.

As I was to have an examination, there would probably be a chance to speak; and if I had a chance to speak I was not so much afraid of being executed as I was of being starved to death while they waited for corroboration of my story. Meantime, however, I was getting a foretaste of what I might expect, and for which I had not the ghost of an idea I would ever be able to obtain redress. By the time I was en route for Havana I was just a bit of dogged human machinery, with a brain which had ceased to work, and a stomach which felt as though it was all gone. The ration of bread, beans and water kept me alive, perhaps, but it did not make any impression on the aching void my late prodigious exertions had left.

There were a dozen of us prisoners, miraculously saved from the slaughter, and the fact that we were not allowed to converse together made no difference to me. I had nothing at all to say to any one else, and I am afraid I swore in the presence of my Maker. A beautiful condition was I in to plead my own cause. Unless something occurred to rouse me it was certain beyond a doubt my fate would be that of the rest.

Then something did occur to rouse me.

That something was—Mrs. Marchmont.

CHAPTER XIV.

ORDERED FOR EXECUTION.

Just after we were landed from the cruiser, and as we were being marched away, I was aware of an intermittent return of an interest in mundane affairs, and looked keenly around to see what was in sight to account for the momentary awakening. Then I was listless as ever.

It was not that I had really lost my courage, but I felt it might as well slumber until there was an opportunity to exercise it to some purpose. I was not destined for immediate examination, and so had time to study over the problems of which nation I should call to my support, and what personality it would be best to perpetuate. If I stuck to the story of being picked up after falling overboard from the Panama it was evident I must continue to be Major O'Rourke; but the question of how far I could keep from being implicated in the Alixis matter suddenly arose; and it seemed a very serious one. Just as sure as I obtained a corroborative evidence from the steamer, so sure would come out how I had been picked up in an open boat; and the story I then told. If I was cleared from implication in one expedition I would be positively identified as belonging to another; whereas, I belonged to neither of them. There was no telling what the outcome would be. The muddle was too much for me and I gave up trying to see the bottom.

Under such circumstances, then, when I heard some one speaking, and looking up saw Mrs. Marchmont, it was no wonder I was obstupefied. She was observing me keenly.

"Surely, I am not mistaken. This is Mr. Considine O'Rourke?"

"An' be the same tokin this is Mrs. Marchmont? It's a distrissful objict Oi am, to m'ate the soight av ye, but this toime Oi tuk no luggidge wid me, an' me reciption has hardly been as warrum as the wan on the Panama. How soon wor I missed?"

"Hush, hush! Positively you must not waste a moment with questions. I happened to see you landed from the cruiser, and wish to know how you left New York, how you came to be captured, and—give me your story briefly as you can. For the brave way you once stood by me I shall do the best in my power for you. And I have a friend here who has influence."

I recognized the good sense of this and governed myself accordingly. I confess I forgot all about the Honduras matter, or I might not have talked so glibly.

"Sure, an' Oi tuk the notion to go to Central Ameriky, an' missed the Panama at Charleston be an hour. I m'ate wid wan Ferdinand Campos, an' we ingaged passage on a thramp st'amer wid a rovin' commission. She was sunk by a Spanish cruiser, an' Campos an' Oi made our ishcape in a boat, bein' picked up by the Panama, as ye know. Oi wor shtandin' joust where Oi parted from Miss Loraney, or, rather, where she shtood joust before we partid, afther the interview wid yoursilves an' Whitstone. Piff! Some wan shtabbed be in the br'ist, an' befour Oi could look around Oi wor overboard.

"The Panama wint on, shpoite av me protistathions, an' Oi shtarted to shwim out—wid such succiss that in the course of siveral hours Oi wor picked up by a blockade runner, which prisintly grounded on the coast av Cuby. Befour Oi had fairly gained me wind the owld cruiser had capthured the schooner, an' me wid it. Here Oi am, innocint as the onbourn babe, but in d'idly danger av me loife. Av ye can hilp me it's much obleeged Oi will be; av ye can't it's the liss ye say av me the bitther. They may think to dhraw yez into that same conspiracy."

As, in accordance with her orders, I hastily sketched my story I could see she was affected far more by it than I could have hoped. At its close she put some shrewd questions on various points concerning which I had not dilated; and finally she left me with the caution:

"If possible, say nothing about all this until you hear from me again. I think I can obtain your discharge. If not, I will try and arrange for your escape. After that you shall again take service with me. I have regretted we did not bring you with us, but Lorena opposed it—for your own sake."

"An' most likely, afther sich a miss av it, she moight objict ag'in?"

"Oh, no. She cannot. She is on the Panama, hundreds of miles south of this. We will follow at our leisure. Now, keep your courage up, and good-day."

I could hardly credit it all when I thought it over. That Mrs. Marchmont should abandon the Panama, lose perhaps weeks of time and propose to put her pretty arms up to the elbow in the hot slime of Cuban affairs for the sake of an uncommendable like myself! I would not have believed it had she not told me herself. Now that she had promised I felt less concern.

One good effect the interview had. It woke me up.

Probably I had been imperceptibly recuperating from the exhaustion caused by my protracted struggle in the water, and the rough handling at the time of capture. If I recovered any strength or flesh under prison diet and usage it was certainly remarkable.

I verily believe there were two dozen of us huddled in a cell less than twenty feet square, and more than one of us had been sleeping on the damp, stone floor.

As for the food, the less one says of it the better. Fortunately, I had been in such condition I ate by instinct. Under ordinary circumstances I think I would have rejected it altogether. Mouldy bread, musty beans, muddy water—and not half enough of any of them! By the time I fairly looked around me I found myself in the midst of a disreputable gang of scarecrows, and in a fair way to soon be as bad as any of them. Out of the whole two dozen there were not more than two or three who had much hope for the future beyond a "short rope and a quick shrift"; or a firing party and a grave in the sand.

From the fact that I had held myself so thoroughly aloof from the rest—small blame to me in the matter—my companions looked upon me with what I could not help but see was prejudice, suspecting me, perhaps, to be a spy, or something of that sort. I did not care so much for that, since I did not believe I had long to remain with them. The more I thought of it the more I was satisfied that the action of Mrs. Marchmont would be swift and decisive. I imagined, indeed, that the good time was at hand when an officer entered and began to talk to me through a wretched interpreter.

Nevertheless, I kept close watch on my tongue, having no certain knowledge of what sort of story Mrs. Marchmont had told. If I was to be claimed by her as a coachman I wanted to represent myself to be neither an envoy extraordinary to Honduras, nor yet an officer in the army of San Salvador, or one of the Southern States.

Therefore, I held to my first rather indefinite story. My name was O'Rourke. I was on my way to Honduras. I had fallen overboard from the Panama, and after remaining several hours in the water had been picked up in a semi-unconscious condition. I was utterly unacquainted with a single soul on board of the schooner, and had no idea of where I was until brought on deck by the sound of the cruiser's guns. Then I had neither resisted nor tried to escape. In the more important parts of this statement the passengers of the Panama would bear me out.

My inquisitor did not believe a word of it. I could see that.

"Pardon me if I doubt. We cannot follow a vessel bound for Central America to find evidences of a very incredible story."

"Yet, if some of her passengers dropped off at Havana they can be found?"

The officer laughed good naturedly.

"Best you had arranged a new story altogether. The Panama does not touch at this port, as you must know, being so familiar with the vessel. If any of her passengers are here doubtless they came in the same manner as yourself; and with the same intentions."

His words gave me a shock. I was glad I had been guarded and mentioned no names. What did I know about Mrs. Marchmont, anyhow? She might be a Cuban conspirator, and a careless word of mine might turn attention in her direction, to her undoing.

He went on:

"It might be you could tell something of this expedition—and others like it. It would not take much information to save your life."

He looked at me questioningly, and I felt the blood flushing my face. Was that what he took me for? I could have struck him if I had not thought of my friend. I shrugged my shoulders and answered steadily:

"Were it the last words I had to speak I would say I have given you the entire truth. I know nothing of Cuban affairs, or of any expeditions, past or present."

"The infernal liar!"

The words were spoken in good plain English, and I recognized the voice instantly. It belonged to the captain of the late Alixis.

There was no space for surprise. I had an account to settle with that gentleman, and as opportunities might be scarce and no time like the present, I wheeled suddenly, stepped in firmly, and in an off-hand way knocked him down. No doubt he had spoken the truth as he knew it, but after what I had suffered at his hands I did not intend he should call me hard names with impunity.

The performance had its dangers. Evidently the captain had been brought in to confront me. A man with a musket—or what would have been a musket half a century ago—came to a ready; the officer drew his pistol; the interpreter dived headforemost across the floor into a bunk, where he wrapped himself in the ragged, filthy blankets and howled. If I had moved a muscle I would have been shot.

Fortunately, I folded my arms and looked calmly at the prostrate captain. I noticed what was going on around me, of course, but gave it no real thought until afterward.

"By all means, take your diversions," said the Spanish officer grimly, watching the captain meanwhile as he scrambled in a dazed way to a sitting posture.

"I am sorry to have to tell you that in default of any profitable information you will be shot at sunrise. You will make the sixth man of the party which is to die."

Then he looked around to see what had become of his interpreter who had so mysteriously vanished; and I had time to think it all over while I was waiting for an official translation.

Shot at sunrise! That left little time for Mrs. Marchmont to get in her work. I wondered what she would think of it if, after having made all her arrangements and paid their price, they handed her over a corpse. Would she be shocked? Would she weep? I rather thought not. She might regret the time and money thrown away in the effort; she might even bemoan the loss of a first-class servitor; but for any of her tears dropping on my tomb—it would not be this trip. The anger I felt was unreasonable, of course, and I was already thinking of a last, dying confession to be left behind, when the interpreter was dragged up to repeat to me in his uncertain English the words I understood well enough. At the same time the captain was hustled out of the cell by the guard. Without waiting for reply from me, the Spanish officer followed, and I was left with the two dozen prisoners, who had been huddled on the farther side of the room but who now came forward.

They all knew what had been said to me, and took it for granted there could be no mistake in the matter. Saluto ta morituri. There was no outburst on my part; there were no protestations on theirs. They simply clasped my hand and said a few words, one after the other. I let them say their say and complete their leave-taking. Then I quietly rolled myself in a blanket and sought that slumber which came to me with but scant delay. I was either benumbed or reckless—and, truthfully speaking, I do not know which.

The next thing I knew some one was shaking my shoulder whilst a light was held to my face. Daylight had not come, but the time for the execution was at hand.

"The barbarians!" I growled, when I had been wakened and fairly understood what was to come. "Nobody but a Spaniard would think of sending a man over the range on an empty stomach."

I might have saved my breath. No one seemed to understand, and the two soldiers who had come for me said nothing beyond a low order to hasten. Between them I was marched out of the cell.

I do not want to make any profession of bravery. Probably I have as much courage as the ordinary man; and when the truth is known, not much more. The night before, though understanding it well enough, I had not seemed to realize what was to come. It was not hope, false or otherwise, which had buoyed me up, but an utter want of interest in the matter.

This morning it was different. I shivered as I stepped out into the cool, midnight air.

The continuation of this very interesting story will be presented in the Ledger of next week. Every subscriber is entitled to our free cameras and patterns as advertised on pages thirteen and fifteen.

Her Opinion.

"Man," remarked the bachelor boarder who is afflicted with the quotation habit, "was created a little lower than the angels."

"If only a little lower," snapped the female with the corkscrew curls, "the angels can't be such high-fliers."

What He May Expect.

Gunner—They say that seats in the stock exchange are more difficult to obtain every year.

Guyer—Yes, soon it will be as difficult to obtain a seat in the stock exchange as it is in a street car.

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Beware of the tireless worker who is always trying to work you.

A bachelor says it's woman's art to deceive and man's folly to believe.

About the time the average man succeeds in developing a theory it explodes.

Love that has nothing but beauty to keep it alive is very apt to be short-lived.

If war is hell, pray what is taking a pleasure jaunt with an untamed automobile?

Smart campaign poets will get around the difficulty by using the names Charles and Theodore.

A physician says that nearly all politicians are afflicted with a cutaneous disease known as the itching palm.

As the campaign will not open until Aug. 1 the thirsty man will have as hard a time as usual during July.

President Roosevelt is too confident of success to be much disturbed by the report that Dowie is for him.

With all his power there are some things that the Czar dare not do. If he did he would do them to Tolstoi.

When lovers sit in blissful silence it may be owing to the fact that there's isn't room between them to get a word in edgeways.

Russian naval men are blamed for the disaster at Port Arthur, though it is clear that the Japanese were partly to blame for it.

A near-sighted Milwaukee man who loves his pipe recently smoked up three packages of breakfast food before discovering his error.

By this time Kouropatkin is probably aware that when the Japanese army lets itself get defeated it is up to some dangerous devilment.

Why can't Congress have the Fourth of July changed to Feb. 22, when its modifying effect on the climate would be more appreciated?

If Kouropatkin had been reading the American papers he might not now be in a position from which he may need the help of the police to extricate himself.

James Whitcomb Riley is putting up a flat building in Indianapolis. He can live in one of the apartments and get plenty of material for more poems on child life if he cares to do so.

RUBY GORDON'S LOVE;

Or

The Mistakes of a Life-Time.

By LIBBIE SPRAGUE PHILLIPS.

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CHAPTER XIII.

These words haunted Addie Vincent the remainder of the day. What could they possibly mean? But even as she asked herself the question she felt that she already knew, alas! but too well. Darrell had, for some reason, been seeking to win her sister's heart from her husband, and—well, he had succeeded. She was sure of this. She now understood what Bessie had meant when she spoke of finding new interests in life. She had found some one else to love, some one who loved her in return.

But did Darrell really love her in return? Of this she was not so sure. She recalled the many times when his looks and manner had seemingly revealed a love for herself. Had he some base motive for stealing her sister's heart? She could call it nothing but stealing. Bessie belonged to Lawrence Armytage and he had stolen her away from him.

Her soul was in despair and confused thoughts racked her brain; but one thought stood out clear and distinct from all others: Bessie was in deadly peril; some one must save her.

Her first idea was to tell Lawrence what she had discovered and let him deal with Leslie Darrell as he deserved to be dealt with, but as she came to think the matter over she felt that this would not do. If he knew that Bessie had been false, even in thought, he would never forgive her. The little love which he did feel for her would be instantly killed. No. Lawrence must never know.

To appeal to Bessie she knew would be worse than useless; it would but make her the more reckless if she knew that her secret had been discovered. But she might appeal to Darrell; surely he must have some little sense of honor. She thought over this for a while, then she abandoned this idea also. It would look as though she was pleading for his love for herself, and her sensitive heart shrank from anything like that.

But something must be done. She also realized that if Bessie was to be saved from the dishonorable love which threatened her, it must be through her; no one else knew of her danger.

She put on her hat and started for a stroll through the grove. She must be alone with her thoughts if she was to solve the perplexing problem which had suddenly presented itself to her mind. And what a sad problem it was, that of working out the salvation of a beloved sister.

With no thought of where her footsteps were to lead her, she wandered on, and after a while, becoming tired, she seated herself upon a mossy bank beside the leafy pathway.

The summer sun was shining above her head, flowers were blooming beneath her feet, the winds whispered and the birds sang; but she was deaf and blind to all these; and so busy was she with her troubled thoughts that she was not aware of any one's presence near her until she heard her name spoken in a pleasant voice, and, looking up, saw Ruby Gordon standing before her.

"Then the beauties of Nature have lured you out into the grove this beautiful afternoon," said Addie, trying to smile as she extended her hand. "I am very glad to see you. I wanted Bessie to come with me last evening to call on you, but baby was fretful and she did not like to leave her."

Ruby sighed. "Bessie seldom comes to see me now," she said; "I have often wondered why."

"I suppose it is because the baby takes so much of her time. What a pity that old Mr. Armytage has such an insane notion concerning you, thus preventing you from visiting at Elmwood!"

"It is an insane idea; that is a fact. But, poor old man, he is more to be pitied than blamed. Imagine what his life must be, haunted day and night by such a hideous thought. But how is Bessie? Well, I suppose."

"Yes," Addie replied in a hesitating way, for the thought had suddenly come to her to make Ruby Gordon her confidant concerning Bessie. Surely, if any one could help her it was this girl who understood what loneliness and sorrow were. She would know how to sympathize with one whose life had also been made bitter, even if her strength of mind and purpose had not been as great as her own. She would not judge Bessie too harshly nor condemn her unjustly. The secret also would be safe with her. "I am greatly worried over Bessie," she added, at length, "and I was just wondering if it would not ease my mind to share its burden with you. But first tell me what kind of a man is Leslie Darrell?"

Ruby did not reply at once; when she did it was in a reluctant way.

"I hate to speak evil of any one, Addie, you know I do; but since you have asked me, I must speak the truth if I answer at all. To my mind, he is a man not to be trusted. Of course, I have a terrible reason for feeling in this way; he proved to be such a wretchedly false friend to Lawrence and myself that it is no wonder that I should distrust him."

"You allude, I suppose, to the publishing of that false marriage notice which brought about such a sad state of affairs. Tell me truly why he did that, Ruby; he explains it as a joke."

Ruby shook her head.

"He never meant it as a joke, Addie; he did it purposely to separate Lawrence and me, for he boasted of it afterward in the presence of us both. His reason for wishing to part us was this: He himself loved me, or fancied that he did, and he felt that if he could in some way place a barrier between Lawrence and me he could then win me for himself. He did that at a venture to see what would come of it, and it brought to him very gratifying results. My blood boils yet when I think of the exultant way in which he boasted of his success. Had it not been for my presence of mind I believe that he and Lawrence would have engaged in a deadly fight. Were it not for his father, Lawrence would not so much as allow him to even step his foot over the threshold of his home. But he is related to the old gentleman, and I believe that he fears him in some way and dares not make of him an enemy. He also joined in the plot to break up Lawrence's marriage with me. He could not bear that I should reign at Elmwood as the wife of his son for the same reason that I am kept from visiting there."

"Does Bessie know this, Ruby—the true reason of his having done as he did—that he loved you? I wonder that she never told me!"

"Yes; she knows. Lawrence explained everything to her at the time. I suppose Bessie was like the rest of us; she could not fail to see that Darrell was greatly interested in you, and feeling, probably, that it did not necessarily appear that he was false in everything because of one false, villainous act, she thought it best not to destroy your faith in him. I admit that he is a very fascinating man; he is handsome, bright, clever and gifted; he also knows how to act as a gentleman if he chooses to do so. Nevertheless I distrust him; but that is not to be wondered at. I want to be just. I feel that I should not seek to prejudice any one else against him because I can have no faith in his goodness. I believe, Addie, that he is truly in love with you, and if you return his love I hope that, for your sake, he will prove himself worthy of you."

"You mistake my motive, Ruby, in making inquiries concerning Leslie Darrell; it is not on my own account that I am doing this, it is because of poor Bessie. I fear you are right—that he is not to be trusted—that he is utterly lacking in principle and honor; for—oh, Ruby!—I hate to tell it, but I must tell some one or go mad with the awful horror of the hideous thought—I have just cause to believe that he is trying to win Bessie's love from Lawrence—that he has in a measure succeeded!"

"Oh, Addie!"

The tone in which Ruby said this expressed the horror that she felt.

"I would give the world to be assured that I am mistaken," Addie continued, "but I am not. There is just cause for alarm. Of course it may be only what men of his class call a flirtation on his part; but she loves him, I am sure of that. Heaven only knows to what it will lead if something is not done to save her! I wish—oh, how I wish!—that I had known his true character when first I made his acquaintance! If Bessie knew I cannot understand why she has allowed him to lead her away from duty and honor. But then, as you have just said, he is a fascinating man; I can imagine the influence his fascinating manner would have over one leading such a loveless life as Bessie. But we must save her, Ruby—you and I. How can we do it?"

The horrified expression had gradually deepened on Ruby's face, and as Addie ceased speaking she drew nearer to the sorrowing girl, and laying her hand gently on her shoulder, said:

"Tell me about it, Addie. What reason have you for believing this? What have you discovered?"

In a tearful voice Addie then related what she had accidentally seen and heard.

Ruby sat for a while in deep thought.

"I doubt not that he has some vile scheme in his mind," she said at length; "to still further injure Lawrence is probably his motive. I know that the way in which Lawrence openly scorns him has more than once lashed his proud nature into fury. If this be true, he will resort to any means that will aid him in carrying out his evil designs. But I cannot see what we are to do. To tell Lawrence would destroy his faith in Bessie; to appeal to Darrell would be worse than useless. I can think of no better way than to talk with Bessie and try to win her from her folly. Tell me, Addie, you have been there as one of the family, Lawrence is not unkind to the poor girl, is he? I could not bear to think that!"

"No; he is not. And since you have asked that question I am going to ask you one concerning him; at the same time I feel that I must beg your pardon for doing so, as it also concerns you. Does Lawrence ever call for a few minutes' talk with you as he passes to and from the village?"

"He does not; that is, not as a rule. Of course, if I chance to be standing on the lawn he usually pauses and asks me how I am getting along, just as any other friend might do. But he has never been inside of our cottage since his marriage, except when Bessie was with him. Why have you asked me this?"

Addie then related what Darrell had said that morning in regard to having seen her standing by the gate as he passed, and the way in which he insinuated that Lawrence spent much of his time with her.

Ruby's eyes flashed with indignation as she listened.

"He is plotting mischief; I am sure of it! He did not see me standing by the gate this morning as he passed; I was sitting in my own room by the window. Go home, Addie, and in a true, sisterly way tell Bessie just what you have learned of her folly, and beg of her to consider what she is doing before Lawrence learns something of it. For their child's sake this must never happen."

Addie hesitated for a moment, and then said:

"Under the circumstances, Ruby, I shrink from talking with Bessie myself. She knows"—she stopped suddenly, and a burning blush covered her face—"she would think," she added presently, "that I myself loved Leslie Darrell and that I was jealous."

Ruby regarded her closely.

"Do you, Addie?" she asked; "do you love him? Is your life also to be darkened and embittered by his falseness?"

Addie turned her head aside to hide the tears that had suddenly dimmed her eyes.

"No," she said slowly; "I think that I can truthfully say that I do not. If I have cherished tender feelings for him within my heart, the scorn and contempt which I now feel for him must surely be able to kill respect and—yes, love. For I believe that love can be killed, can it not, Ruby?" Here she grasped Ruby's hand in an excited way and exclaimed: "Tell me, Ruby, is your love for Lawrence Armytage as great as it was once? Has it not lessened in the two years since his marriage?"

"Don't, Addie! don't ask me that! I dare not even consider the thought."

"But surely, Ruby, if he were false and unworthy and as base as Leslie Darrell your love would die, would it not?"

Poor girl! Ruby knew why she had asked this question, knew that even now while she was trying to cheat herself into the belief that a knowledge of Darrell's baseness had killed her love for him, it still burned within her heart, and there would ever remain a haunting memory of its old-time sweetness.

But she could not tell her so. She merely shook her head. Then, after a moment's silence, she said:

"I think that I will talk to Bessie. I shall see her at the picnic tomorrow, and will in some way find a chance of talking with her there. I had thought that I would not attend, but it will afford me an opportunity of seeing her, and I believe that I will go."

"Oh, Ruby, if you only would! I was sure that you would be willing to help me! Do you know, I often wonder how you can be so amiable, so sweet and good after having known such bitter sorrow."

"This life is not all, Addie; there is to be another, and the joys of that will fully compensate for all the woes of this. It is this thought that makes my darkened life endurable."

CHAPTER XIV.

Addie felt that much depended upon this talk which Ruby was to have with Bessie, and her first thought on waking the next morning was whether it was to be a fair day for the picnic. And rising hastily, she gazed out upon the dawn of a beautiful morning.

Early as it was, she discovered that Bessie had already risen and was out on the lawn enjoying its dewy freshness.

But no; she appeared to be searching for something. With bent head she roamed slowly about, keeping her eyes fixed upon the ground, stooping now and then to push aside some flowering shrub in order to see if what she sought was not hidden by its leaves, continuing in this way until every foot of the lawn had seemingly been gone over. Then as she came slowly toward the house, Addie noted the extreme pallor of her face; and when later they met at the breakfast table, she could not fail to observe that she appeared to be nervous and agitated.

She had probably lost a valuable ring or something of that kind and did not care to have Lawrence learn about it; but as, after breakfast, she began to make ready for the day's outing without saying anything to her of her loss, she wondered at it. And with a mind again filled with perplexing thoughts, she went into the garden to gather flowers with which to decorate the lunch baskets.

Having finished her work she was about to return to the house, when a nail which protruded from one of the garden seats caught in the folds of her dress, and in freeing herself she chanced to move the seat around, and discovered, lying beneath one of the legs, a scrap of folded paper. At any other time she would have paid no attention to it; now something seemed to tell her that this was the article for which Bessie had searched, and she picked it up with hands that would tremble in spite of herself, and hastily her eyes ran over its contents.

Instinctively she had felt that it was a note from Darrell, and she was right. It ran as follows:

"My Own Darling: I have been thinking over what you told me yesterday—that you believed that your sister already suspected that there was a secret love between us—and I have come to feel that you are right. Under the circumstances, the wisest thing for us to do is to go at once, before she speaks of this to Lawrence. I can be ready by Tuesday of next week. I shall send this by a messenger boy, as I may not have a chance of speaking to you on the subject at the picnic tomorrow. Think it over and let me know what you decide upon. Do not be afraid, darling, to trust yourself to me. I long to take you away from the loveless life which you are now leading and make your future so bright that in after years, as you look back upon the time spent with Lawrence Armytage, it will seem like a black, hideous dream."

For a few minutes after the reading of that note Addie Vincent stood as though paralyzed. It was worse even than she had thought; they were planning an elopement.

In after years she never forgot the slow, torturing agony of that day. It seemed to her that the picnic grounds would never be reached, and after having arrived there, it was a long time before she could find an opportunity of speaking with Ruby alone.

Even then she felt that she was playing a dishonorable part in revealing the contents of that wretched note; but considering the fact that his sister's honor and the happiness of her whole future life was at stake, she nerved herself to do that which under any other conditions she could never have done, and then said:

"You must talk with her this day, Ruby, and win from her a promise to abandon this wild and wicked idea; otherwise we will have to tell Lawrence. I am glad that Lawrence came to this picnic; it will prevent them from talking with each other a great deal today, and after she learns that her wicked plans have been found out, I think that we can win her from her folly if only for the baby's sake."

Addie tried to speak in a hopeful tone, but her heart was heavy with a great fear, and not until she saw Ruby and Bessie stealing away for a ramble together did she feel anything like relief; and even then she wondered how she was to control her feelings and hide her nervousness from the others until she could learn the result of that interview.

Bessye Armytage had no idea of what Ruby wished to talk with her about as she drew her away to a secluded part of the grounds, and was struck dumb with amazement when Ruby handed her the note, over the loss of which she had been grieving all the morning.

Never again did Ruby Gordon see on mortal face such a look of shame and despair as Bessie's wore then; never did human voice sound so despairingly.

"Then you know all? Well, what are you going to do?" Then as Ruby did not at once reply, she asked in a voice that now rang with anger and pain: "Who gave you that note, Ruby Gordon? Where did you get it?"

"It was given to me by one who will never betray you further; nor will I, if you will promise that you will give up now and forever all thoughts of doing such a wicked thing as is mentioned in that note. Bessie, my poor sister, what has led you into this? Have you fully considered what your future must surely be if you yield to the fascinations of Leslie Darrell and leave the shelter of your husband's home for him? You——"

"Wait!" Bessie interrupte.d as she sank down upon the ground and locked her hands tightly together in a despairing way; "you speak of the shelter of my husband's home; it is a shelter, of course, but that is all; it has never been a home to me in the true sense of the word, and you know it. It never will be! I can live in an atmosphere of cold indifference no longer! I would rather die!"

"You might better die, Bessie, than to do as you have planned to do."

"Ah! how you wish I would! You could then be mistress of the home which you think such a desirable place, you—— but why," she suddenly exclaimed, "are you seeking to prevent me from leaving that wonderful home? Can you not understand that if I go as I have planned to go, that Lawrence will then be free? He will have no trouble in securing a divorce then, and you may both be happy."

"Never! Happiness could never come to me if the price of that happiness was an immortal soul!"

"Then you think——"

"I think," Ruby continued, as Bessie paused and did not finish the sentence, "that if you take this step you are lost. In this life you will be an outcast; shunned, scorned and despised by all respectable people; then when you come to realize fully what you have done and what you are, the awful sense of shame which will then come to you will sink your soul into eternal depths of woe! Consider, Bessie; you will have no one's love but that of the base man who is seeking to lead you astray, and even he will not respect you. What comfort, what happiness can you possibly know, an outcast from the society that you love, from the friends that have loved and respected you?"

"Is the life of an outcast more freighted with misery than is the life of an interloper? For as such I feel that I am regarded. I know that blazing scorn always falls to the lot of an outcast, but even that cannot be more piercing, more stinging, than cold, freezing indifference. Your preaching sounds well, Ruby Gordon, but you have not had my experience; you know nothing of this awful heart hunger, this craving for love and sympathy and——"

"Do I not?" Ruby interrupted. "Do you think that my own heart knows no cravings, no unsatisfied longing for tenderness and loving words? Ah, Bessie! it is because I know so well what your life has been that I am able to pity and not condemn you for the evil into which you have fallen. But from that evil you still have a chance to rise, pure and unspotted, before the world. Only God knows of the wickedness of your heart, and he in tender pity will forgive."

"Then you would have me believe when you speak of the unsatisfied longings of your own heart, that you receive no tendernesses, no loving and endearing words from your lover, Lawrence Armytage? What does he say to you during the long hours he spends in your society?"

"Dear Bessie, believe me, you have been cruelly deceived. Lawrence has never spent long hours in my society since you became his wife. And I do not like to have you speak of him as my lover. He is your husband, Bessie, and as such he loves you, I know."

"And I know that he does not!"

Ruby sighed deeply while her face grew pale with sadness. How was she to save this girl from sin and shame; what more could she say; what could she do?

"But you will promise me, Bessie," she said, as she knelt on the ground beside her, "that you will give up this intended flight with Leslie Darrell, and be true to yourself, if only for your baby's sake?"

Bessie sat for a moment in silence, then she raised her face which had grown white and colorless, and asked:

"Who gave you that note, Ruby Gordon? Where was it found?"

"It was found on the lawn at Elmwood. I cannot tell you who gave it to me. But Lawrence knows nothing of all this; he never shall know if you will give me your promise to give up Leslie Darrell."

"And if I make no such promise—what then?"

"Then I shall feel it my duty to tell him, and thus save you in spite of yourself."

From Bessie's white, drawn lips sounded a mirthless, reckless laugh.

"I should surely be saved then!" she exclaimed. "Why, Ruby Gordon, he would drive me from his home at once; he would refuse to ever look upon my face again!"

"You are wrong, Bessie. Lawrence Armytage is a noble, loyal gentleman. He would never forgive your sin, of course, if you leave him to go with Leslie Darrell, but he will forgive your folly for having dreamed of taking such a step. He would be pitiful and merciful."

"But I shall never ask for either his pity or his mercy! Oh, Ruby, go away and leave me alone! Why have you interfered with me—you of all others—you who would profit by my sin? If I take this sinful step, as you term it, the mistakes which we have all made can be made right. Answer me truly: Would you not gladly wed Lawrence Armytage even yet, if he were to make you his wife?"

"I will answer you truly, Bessie. If he were free, really free to make me his wife, I would marry him, of course. But, my poor, mistaken sister, the step which you are about to take would not make him free; that is, according to my ideas. I should never be the wife of a man who had a divorced wife living."

"Then I had better commit suicide!"

Ruby was in despair. It seemed to her that Bessie's heart was utterly hardened, and that her words were but making the matter worse. But she could not give her up; she would plead yet a little longer.

"Oh, Bessie, Bessie!" she cried, as she crept closer to her side, "don't speak like that! What have I ever done that you should think for one minute that I desire your death? I love you, Bessie, and it is for this reason that I am pleading with you to be true to yourself. Do you think that I could be happy, Bessie, knowing that somewhere in this world a dear friend was living in wickedness, sin and misery? For, as I said before, it would be a life of misery—you could know no happiness. Then there is, your little child. God gave her to you. He expects you to train her and to guide her feet in the pathway that shall lead to His Kingdom. If you fail in your duty to your child and through your neglect her precious soul is also lost, what then? It is an awful thought to consider, and I beg of you to consider it now. Do not rob your baby's life of its richest blessing, a mother's love; for there is nothing that can take its place—nothing!"

Bessie shuddered as she listened to these words which fell from Ruby's lips like a voice from Heaven. Then, after a moment's silence, she threw herself downward upon the mossy bank and sobbed bitterly.

"Oh, Ruby!" she cried, "go away and leave me to think it all out alone. I cannot bear to hear you talk longer! I should go mad!"

"But first make me the promise that I ask."

"Give me time to think first. I have been so very unhappy! My life has been so empty, so blank, so cheerless! And I—— Oh, Ruby! I cannot bear it longer—I cannot!"

"Cheerless it may be," Ruby replied, "but not empty. You have your baby. Keep her ever in your mind and you will find it hard to do wrong. But I will, as you request, leave you now, and may God help you to choose the right! Ask for His help, Bessie; you will not ask in vain."

Then, with a prayer in her own heart for the weak, misguided wife of Lawrence Armytage, Ruby Gordon, the girl who yet loved him in spite of herself, went slowly back to where the rest of the party were having a joyous time.

Then from behind a clump of bushes where he had been hiding and listening to every word that had been spoken by them both, stepped a man. It was Leslie Darrell.

CHAPTER XV.

He knew now that if he was to carry out the plans which he had formed of disgracing Lawrence Armytage there was no time to be lost; he must act at once. Another appeal like the one to which Bessie had just listened could not fail to have its desired effect upon her. If it did not, Lawrence would be told everything; then there would be no end of trouble.

He must form some plan of action, and, if possible, induce her to flee with him now, this very day. And stepping down to the leafy pathway over which Ruby had just gone, he advanced to where Bessie was still sitting bowed beneath a weight of crushing thoughts.

He did not care to have her know that he had been listening to all that had passed between herself and Ruby, so assuming an air of nervousness and agitation he exclaimed:

"Everything is known, Bessie! Some one, your sister, I suppose, has found it all out and has told Lawrence. I shall never forgive myself if I have managed so badly as to bring the fire of his wrath upon your defenseless head. But this must not happen! You could never endure the storm of his reproaches and bitter accusations—you shall not! I will take you away at once. My business affairs are not all arranged as I had wished, but I can manage it in some way; I must! I can never let you go back to Elmwood now. I cannot lose you, Bessie! No one will ever love you as I will love you. You are not afraid, are you, dear? I have made you understand, I think, how dear you are to me; I will make your life all joy, all brightness; and surely, Bessie, the life which you have led with Lawrence Armytage, moody and silent as he is, has not been such a joyous one that you will regret to leave it. You will consent, darling, will you not, to go with me now? It is our only chance!"

Never was a woman so unhappy as Bessie Armytage; never was woman so tempted first one way, then another. She felt when under the influence of this man that to flee with him was the right thing to do to secure future happiness. His black, thrilling, compelling eyes held and enthralled her, even while she struggled and revolted against his power over her senses.

Against this power she struggled now. Ruby's parting words seemed to echo and re-echo in her ears: "Ask God to help you, Bessie; you will not ask in vain." But even while she realized her own weakness no prayer came from her lips.

"I cannot pray," she told herself. "I am not good and gentle like Ruby Gordon; our natures are different.' And a gasping sob broke from her lips as she realized how very different they were.

"Ah, well!" she mused, "I, too, might have been good if Lawrence had only loved me. It is the only blessing that I ever asked from Heaven—my husband's love. It has been denied me—what wonder that I have lost faith in prayer! And yet I—yes, I do need the help of Heaven or I am lost—lost!"

Unconsciously she uttered this last thought aloud, and Darrell, believing that she was frightened because of his having told her that Lawrence knew of the step she was about to take, knelt on the ground beside her, and never had more eloquent words fallen from his lips, freighted as they were with seeming love and hope.

The struggle in Bessie's mind was a terrible one. Love and duty were at war with each other; which would conquer?

Oh, Leslie!" she gasped, "I wish that I might die! I can never go back to the old life now; it was terrible enough before. But of the future I am afraid. Can one really find happiness in sin?"

"We shall, my darling. Besides, the sin will not be so very great. It will all come right in the end. Lawrence will seek a divorce, of course; then we shall be married. Trust me, dearest; all shall yet be well."

"And you will never grow tired of me, Leslie? Swear to me that nothing shall change you, that nothing shall take you from me! Promise me that you will love me truly and faithfully and that you will love me alone as long as we both shall live."

"I promise, darling; nothing shall part us but death!"

And poor, trusting, deluded soul, she believed him! Then, after gazing straight at his handsome face for several seconds as though she would read every thought of his heart, she suddenly, with a weary gesture, placed both hands within his and laid her head over against his shoulder.

She was lost. Never again was her poor heart to be free from the gnawing pangs of remorse; never again was her soul to be free from a sense of its own eternal ruin.

"Now we must arrange our plans," said Darrell, as he gently put her from him. "We will go quietly back to the rest of the party, each by a different way; then, when all are ready to return home, tell Addie that you have decided to ride with the Haddens. As soon as your party has started for home I will take you with me in my own carriage and we will drive straight to the station; we will be in time, probably, for the 5 o'clock train and can be miles and miles away before any one has discovered our flight."

"I have been looking all over for you!" exclaimed Addie, as Bessie at last made her appearance. "Lawrence has grown tired of the merrymaking and has gone home, and I had begun to think that you had gone with him."

A look of relief came over Bessie's face. If Lawrence had gone home, this would make it easier for her to get away without attracting attention. And being in ignorance of the fact that Darrell had lied to her when he told her that Lawrence had learned their secret, she felt that he had gone home because he would not now ride in the same carriage with her.

With what bitter words he was thinking to denounce her when she came! Ah! she could never go back now. She would not dare! Lawrence would but turn her away. There was but one thing for her to do now; she must go with Darrell, no matter how much she might come to shrink from the thought.

And a great fear and dread of the future did come over her after Addie and Ruby had gone, and as Darrell was about to assist her into his own carriage a great trembling seized her. Would the love of this man make up to her for what she was leaving for him—a luxurious home, a host of friends, a kind, if not a loving, husband, and—her baby?

A sound between a sob and a moan broke from her lips as she began to realize that from the choice she had made there was no turning back, nothing could alter it now; she had indeed left her child forever. And Darrell, bending his head at that moment to whisper a word of cheer, was struck by the deathlike pallor of her face, and he caught these words as they fell from her lips between great gasps of pain: "My baby! Oh, my baby!"

"Baby will be all right," he said, trying to speak hopefully; "we will have it with us in a short time. Lawrence will secure a divorce as soon as possible and wed Ruby Gordon, and she, of course, will not care to keep your child; we can easily gain possession of it then. Trust me, Bessie; all shall yet be well."

Hypocrite that he was, he said all this in a voice full of seeming tenderness and pity for the sorrowing heart of the woman who had given up all, even honor itself, for love of him; but secretly he was cursing her fainting heart and wondering if his life was to be made miserable by hearing her constantly lament having left her child.

And within his own heart there was not the exultant feeling that he had expected to experience when his unholy purpose had been accomplished, thereby filling the life of Lawrence Armytage with heavy, unbearable woe and staining the name of which he was so proud, with dishonor so black that nothing could ever wipe away the miserable stain. But it was not repentance for his miserable deeds that had dulled his sense of joy; it was the memory of Addie Vincent's lovely, bewitching face, and the look of sad reproach which he had seen in her eyes when last she had raised them to his face. He had offered her his hand to assist her into the carriage as she was about to leave the picnic grounds, and she had ignored his proffered assistance and bent upon him a look that he could never forget.

He knew that it was she who had found the lost note and given it to Ruby Gordon; knew that her pure heart understood at last the vileness of his. Besides, he loved her, and the memory of the joy and happiness that might have crowned his life had his heart been less filled with evil, would haunt him forevermore.

So the feeling that filled his heart was a curious mixture of triumph and regret; and the regret was just deep enough to make him feel really desperate. And without another word to poor Bessie, he lashed his horse into a speed that filled her with alarm, and the sudden fear for her personal safety, together with the pain and sorrow of her aching heart, brought a look of terror to her face. And thus the tragedy of her life began.

To Addie Vincent the danger that threatened her sister through her weakness and folly was of such an appalling nature that the sorrow which a knowledge of her lover's falseness had brought to her own heart was, in a measure, forgotten as her mind became absorbed in the thought that nothing could ever wipe the black stain of dishonor from her sister's name if she persisted in her folly. It and the fate it would bring would have to be faced to the bitter end.

"I shall run down this evening to see you for a few minutes," she said to Ruby, as the carriage stopped at the Gordon cottage and Ruby was about to alight. And Ruby, understanding the anxiety that filled her heart, took her hand for a moment and gave her a look that was full of hope and meaning.

Her face brightened, and as the carriage went forward again she, too, tried to hope for the best. But just before they reached the gateway at Elmwood the Haddens drove up behind them, and on looking round Addie discovered that Bessie was not with them. What did it mean?

"Where is Bessie?" she called. "I thought that she was to come with you."

"She did intend to, but just at the last moment Leslie Darrell proposed that she go round by the village with him to select some bunting for decorating purposes. He is going to give a lawn party next week."

No thought of the awful truth came to Addie's mind; but her heart sank with the weight of the fear that Bessie would be unable to resist his fascinating influence and would in the end be lost; and it was a very sad, despairing face that she presented to Lawrence as he came forward to assist her from the carriage, and asked the same question which but a moment before had trembled on her own lips:

"Where is Bessie?"

Another installment of this highly interesting story will appear in next week's Ledger, leading to some very remarkable developments. The free premiums of cameras and patterns are still offered to all subscribers as announced on pages thirteen and fifteen.

RACE DONE?

Not a Bit of It.

A man who thought his race was run made a food find that brought him back to perfect health.

"One year ago I was unable to perform any labor, in fact, I was told by my physicians that they could do nothing further for me. I was fast sinking away, for an attack of grip had left my stomach so weak it could not digest any food sufficient to keep me alive.

"There I was just wasting away, growing thinner every day and weaker, really being snuffed out simply because I could not get any nourishment from food.

"Then my sister got after me to try Grape-Nuts food which had done much good for her, and she finally persuaded me, and although no other food had done me the least bit of good my stomach handled the Grape-Nuts from the first and this food supplied the nourishment I had needed. In three months I was so strong I moved from Albany to San Francisco and now on my three meals of Grape-Nuts and cream every day I am strong and vigorous and do fifteen hours' work.

"I believe the sickest person in the world could do as I do, eat three meals of nothing but Grape-Nuts and cream and soon be on their feet again in the flush of best health like me.

"Not only am I in perfect physical health again but my brain is stronger and clearer than it ever was on the old diet. I hope you will write to the names I send you about Grape Nuts, for I want to see my friends well and strong.

"Just think that a year ago I was dying, but today, although I am over 55 years of age, most people take me to be less than 40, and I feel just as young as I look." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

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Look for the little book, "The Road to Wellville," in each package.

Rural Liars.

Old Inhabitant (loafing at Cross Roads grocery)—Talkin' about crop failures, I remember a time when people had to eat up all the farm stock and then live on the fodder wot they had saved fer the cattle.

Older Inhabitant—Huh! That's nothin'. Why, I recollect the time when provisions got so scarce that the starvin' farmers hed to go out an' shoot an amatoor sportsman fer dinner, an' then cook him with the wood from the "No Trespass" signs.

A Tragedy in Brief.

"Why don't you write another play, Mr. Gillette," an enthusiastic friend inquired of the actor; "a good, live, realistic, up-to-date one?"

Mr. Gillette scribbled something on the back of a card.

"How would this do?" he inquired. "Scene—A drawing-room. Married lady seated, young man in dress suit at her feet. Folding doors at back open. Discovers husband with a revolver. He fires and kills married lady and young man. Husband then advances and contemplates victims. After a pause, he exclaims: 'A thousand pardons! I'm in the wrong flat!' Slow curtain."

How the Girls Fooled Their Dad.

At Eldorado a trusting father told his girls that he would pay them one cent apiece for all the dandelion blossoms they would dig from his lawn. When he came home in the evening, the girls counted out four hundred and eighty-seven blossoms, and he had to pay them $4.87.

The next morning, as he started for his office, he was hailed at the gate by a small boy, who wanted to know if "them girls" wanted any more dandelions at half a cent apiece.

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A Business Woman.

Pretty Girl—Are you Miss Backbay's waiting maid?

Maid—Yes'm.

"Miss Backbay is a great heiress from Boston, isn't she?"

"She is."

"And very much sought after?"

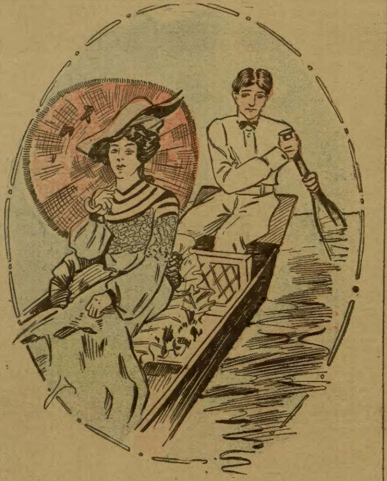
"Well, yes."

"I presume so. Well, if you will give me the addresses of her gentlemen admirers, I will be very much obliged."

"Dear me! What for?"

"I am selling encyclopedias."

THEN HE KISSED HER.



"While I am as much opposed to the anarchist as any one else," she said, "it is still evident to me that there is something very attractive about the word."

"What is it?" he asked.

"The pronunciation of the last syllable," she replied.

Wanted to Be in Time.

Friend—There is a new cure for your disease—discovered by a noted European scientist. All the papers are talking about ot.

Patient—My gracious! Get me some at once. Don't lose a day; don't lose an hour; don't lose a moment!

"Certainly. But, my dear friend, your disease is not dangerous. Why so much hurry?"

"There is not an instant to waste. These new cures always stop curing after they have been tried a few weeks."

As Pa Pursued.

The elopers sped on in the red automobile.

"Now that we have eloped," whispered the timid girl, "do you think our money will last?"

"Don't bother me about money," shouted the young man. "I'm wondering if the gasoline will last."

Just then the lights of papa's pursuing machine flashed in the distance.

Unaffected by the Higher Criticism.

A little Boston girl found it difficult to master a stitch in knitting, and her aunt thought to enforce patience by reminding her that Rome was not built in a day. To which came the quick response: "Oh, aunty, how can you talk so? Don't you know that it took God only six days to make the whole world, and I don't suppose he spent more than half an hour on Rome!"

One Sure Rule.

Interviewer—I understand, Mr. Murphy, that you are one hundred years old. In that case you can no doubt give the public some valuable rules for the attainment of long life.

Mr. Murphy—There is only wan.

"Only one? So much the better. What is it?"

"Get born in Oirland."

A Dangerous Plot.

Chinese Laundryman—Me wantee learn play footballee.

College Man—What for?

"So teachee othel Chineeman washee-wash how play footballee."

"Then what?"

'Len we go back to China and lickee Japanese likee sixty."

The Burglar's Joke.

Burglar—There goes a detective. Pick his pocket, and bring me his knife.

Pickpocket—Wot d'ye want his knife fer?

Burglar—The nex' time I'm attacked I'll defend meself with it, an' then leave it behind fer him to find when he's huntin' fer clews.

A Knock-Down Argument.

Skeptic—You have given me many messages from departed friends, but not one of them has told me anything I didn't know of.

Medium (with dignity)—I would have you understand, sir, that the spirits of the dead have something better to do than to come back to earth and teach school.

Ladies, Preserve Your Youthful Appearance.

Madame Mignette's Beauty Cream and Skin Food removes every defect, spot, freckle, pimple, blemish or wrinkle, leaving the skin soft, clear and smooth. It is perfectly harmless and will not injure the most delicate skin. It preserves and brings back the youthful glow to the fact and ruddiness to the cheeks, preserving it in this condition until extreme old age. This preparation has been used for years and hundreds are now using it and are more than delighted with the results.

Send ten (10) cents for formula which you can have filled at any drug store at a very small cost. Do not delay, but write at once. Box 491, Blairsville, Pa.

Spilkin's Character.

Rev. Dogood—No man is so bad that there is not a little of the angel left in him.

Bobson—Guess that's so. Remember Spilkins? Everybody thought he was about the worst man on earth. Why, his own mother wouldn't come to his funeral. Well, sir, I've been told a thousand times a month for the last five years that Spilkins was the only real saint that ever lived.

"My goodness!"

"I married Spilkins' widow."

A Disagreeable Job.

A washerwoman applied for help to a gentleman, who gave her a note to the manager of a certain club. It read as follows:

"Dear Mr. X.: This woman wants washing."

Very shortly afterward the answer came back:

"Dear Sir: I dare say she does, but I don't fancy the job."

Now They Don't Speak.

"I think that Mrs. Van Ruxton is just horrid."

"What now, dear?"

"Why, I told her I had been taking up carpet and was worn out."

"What did she say?"

"Why, the mean thing said she had often remarked that I looked threadbare."

Literary Success.

Ernie—Beatrice wrote a novel and it was actually published.

Eva—Gracious! And did she get any royalty?

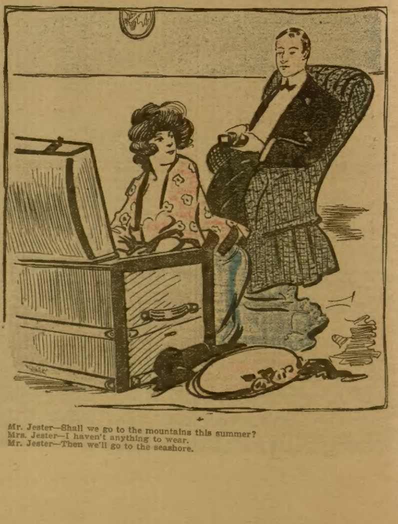
Ernie—Yes, indeed. She made enough out of the sales to buy herself a foreign nobleman.

A Scientific Diagnosis.

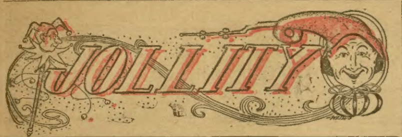
College Senior—So you think Tom will propose?

College Junior—Yes; last night his pulse was 70—temperature 95; this afternoon his pulse was 90—temperature 105; I think the crisis will occur by tonight.

WHERE SHE WOULD BE RIGHT IN LINE.



Mr. Jester—Shall we go to the mountains this summer?
Mrs. Jester—I haven't anything to wear.
Mr. Jester—Then we'll go to the seashore.



A Silent Pilot.

Nothing helps so much in the enjoyment of your vacation as a good map. It shows you the streams and lakes you can fish, the mountains you can climb, the places of interest you can visit and the roads you can wheel or tramp. The Lackawanna Railroad has just issued a set of colored maps on a large scale, showing the territory reached by its lines in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. These maps give every highway, postoffice, trolley line and railroad and are so bound that they can be conveniently carried in the pocket. They are invaluable to automobile tourists and travelers and should be owned by every one who wishes to be informed on the geography of these three states. The entire set in a neat cover may be had by sending ten cents in stamps to T. W. Lee, General Passenger Agent, Lackawanna Railroad, New York City.

The Edition is Limited—Write Today.

Full of Medical Knowledge.

A lawyer in Lynn, Mass., appeared before the Fall River court as counsel for a woman who was injured in an accident, and by his unusual amount of medical learning was able to introduce into his argument many medical terms which impressed the jury and the court. The jury found for his client, and one of the jurors remarked, afterward:

"What a powerful lot of medicine that lawyer knows! I should think he must have been studying up pretty near the whole of Lydia Pinkham's works."

Her Curiosity.

"Mrs. Chellus looks bad, doesn't she?"

"Yes, and no wonder. She's been awake every night for a week past."

"The idea! What was the matter?"

"She discovered about a week ago that her husband talks in his sleep, and, of course, she had to listen."

As Usual.

Rodrick—I tried every way to get rid of those cats. I threw alarm-clocks at them and fired off a shotgun.

Van Albert—And then you had more peace?

Rodrick—No, I had more cats.

Then It Was Easy.

It was on the Yalu.

"Charge!" roared the Japanese general.

The little brown men hesitated.

"Imagine you are St. Louis hotelkeepers," continued the officer.

Thus stimulated they charged wonderfully.

If the Japs Continue.

Gunner—Yes, submarine boats are very popular of late years. Soon the navies of the world will be under water.

Guyer—Yes, and I guess Russia's will be the first.

Popular Fad.

"This literary journal," remarked the newspaper man, "contends that the modern book-reader skips."

"It isn't always the book-reader," said the great merchant; "sometimes it's the bookkeeper."

Playing the Limit.

"Say, did youse ever take on booze till youse got snaiks?" asked Fuzzy Fred.

"Worse'n dat," replied Guzzling Gus. "Onct I got to de stage where I seen woodsaws floatin' in de air fer tree days."

In Some Doubt.

Passer—What's going on in that hall?

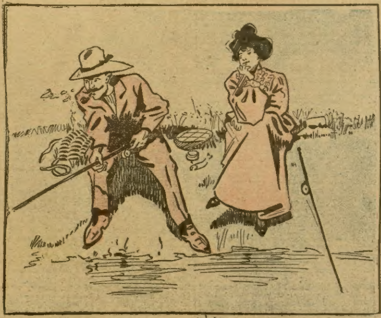
Policeman—Well, there's a lot of long-haired men and short-haired women there, but I don't know whether it's a suffrage association or an athletic club.

They Don't Read the Papers.

St. Peter—You can't come in.

Millionaire—Wha-at? You just send for the daily papers and read the reports of the funeral sermon that Rev. Softlie preached over me.

HER CATCH.



"If you don't stop talking," cautioned the husband, "I'll not be able to catch any fish."

"That's funny," answered the wife. "When a girl angles for a husband she has to talk a great deal."

"I know. But there's a difference between fish and lobsters."

Point of View.

Biggs—Soques is quite an optimist.

Diggs—I never noticed it.

Biggs—Well, he is; at least he seems to take a rosy view of everything.

Diggs—Oh, that is merely a reflection from his nose.

Financially

An exchange tells us that all Americans are very popular in Europe.

Of course this takes in all who are not short.

Anything to Start Him.

Cholly (12 p. m.)—I'm not going until you admit that you love me.

Helen—Why in the world didn't you tell me that two hours ago?

A Lingering Hope.

Manager—How long have you been on the stage?

Applicant—Seventeen years.

Manager—And do you still hope to become an actor?

Worse Than Calm.

Church—And you say he is calm in the face of danger?

Gotham—Calm's no word for it. Why, when his wife gets after him he never says a word!

Somewhat Different.

"Why, I wasn't aware that Spotkins ever played cards," said the astonished friend.

"He doesn't," replied the victim, with a sigh long drawn out. "He works them."

Her Specialty.

Green—Peckem tells me that his wife is an excellent manager.

Brown—Well, she seems to have the management of Peckem down pretty fine.

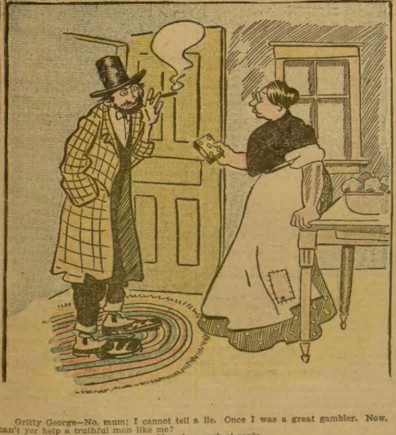
An Ear-Splitter.

"We've got a dandy college yell, now."

"What is it?"

"We give four Russian battleships, a siss-boom-ah, and then two Jap generals."

TOUCHED HER HEART.



Gritty George—No, mum; I cannot tell a lie. Once I was a great gambler. Now, can't yer help a truthful man like me?

The Lady—Yes, my poor man. Here is a pack o' cards.

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MEN WANTED! We have a position open for one good man in each locality, local or travelling, at $840 a year and expenses $2.50 per day, tacking up show cards and generally advertising a New Discovery. No experience necessary. Write for particulars. SALUS MEDICINAL CO., London, Canada
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DETECTIVES WANTED, Man or Woman in every locality, without experience; plenty of work; big pay. Address in own handwriting, DEVEREUX AND SUTHERLAND DETECTIVE AGENCY, CHICAGO, Department A.
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HIS LOVES.

"The woman I love with my heart," he said,
"Is a cozy-cornery girl;
A sofa-pillowy, soft and willowy,
Smoother of ills that are big and billowy,
Sympathetic, nonascetic,
Dear little love of a girl.

"The woman I love with my brain," he said,
"Is a brilliant-stimulant girl:
She's sheer delight to my mental sight,
With a wit as quick as an arrow's flight,
A comrade true and a sweetheart, too,
And a never-wearying girl.

"The woman I love with my soul," he said,
"Is a Saint Cecilia girl;
The meaning fine of a love divine
In her movements show, in her glances shine,
Fairest of all she holds me in thrall,
She's a simply adorable girl."

"Then fare you well and forever," she said
Her scarlet lip a curl;
"To think that I—no matter, goodby!"
"Ah, Love," he said, "'tis for you I sigh.
"All three you are, my sweet, my star,
My one, my only girl."

—Ladies' World.

MRS. DOBBS' LETTERS.

BY MAX ADELER.

One day Mrs. Dobbs wrote the following letter to her dear friend, Mrs. Smith:

"Darling: Can't you come over on Tuesday and spend a couple of days with me? I am very, very anxious to see you. Bring your dear baby with you. How I long to kiss the sweet little cherub! Yours ever,
"LOUISA."

She gave the letter to Mr. Dobbs to mail, and he put it in his coat pocket. On his way downtown he met a man, and they got into such an exciting discussion over the Russo-Japanese war that Dobbs forgot all about the letter, and let it lie in his pocket. Mrs. Dobbs waited. She waited for an answer, but none came. She waited till Tuesday arrived and passed without Mrs. Smith turning up with the baby or sending her a reply.

Mrs. Dobbs was indignant. She sat down and wrote another letter, as follows:

"Mrs. Smith: I am very anxious to know why you didn't reply to my letter the other day. It was more than unkind. If you do not care to continue our acquaintance further, of course I don't. Yours, etc.,
"LOUISA DOBBS."

Mrs. Dobbs handed this letter to Mr. Dobbs just as he was leaving the house in the morning, and asked him to drop it in the postoffice as he went past. He said he would, and he put it carefully in his coat pocket.

At the corner of the street he met Judge Frees, and an animated discussion ensued respecting the ensuing presidential election. Mr. Dobbs was so interested that he went to the Judge's office and stayed there an hour. By that time the letter was forgotten and all the conditions prepared for a war to the knife on the part of Mrs. Dobbs against Mrs. Smith.

A week rolled by, and Mrs. Dobbs heard nothing from Mrs. Smith. Mrs. Dobbs gradually grew madder and madder. Her rage ran up to one hundred and ten degrees in the shade. Now she knew Mrs. Smith intended to cut her and insult her. Finally, one day, she boiled clean over in the following letter, addressed to Mrs. Smith:

"Madam: Your outrageous and impudent conduct toward me merits such scorn and contempt as I feel, but cannot express. Henceforth we are enemies! I hate you! Yes, hate; and I regret that I ever asked such a viper to my house. Don't you ever dare to set your foot in my doors, you or any of your brats! Do you understand me? With contempt, LOUISA DOBBS."

There was a fatality about it; but when Dobbs took this letter with him he carried it in his hand; he met nobody who talked of politics or the presidential election, but he went straight to the postoffice and mailed the letter.

The next day Mr. Smith came to town and went to Dobbs' office, and, presenting the letter to him, asked:

"Dobbs, what in the name of common sense does this mean? Is your wife insane?"

Dobbs read it over slowly, and for a while he was bewildered.

Suddenly a light dawned on him.

"Thun—der!" he exclaimed. "Why, my goodness, Smith, I had two other letters for your wife, that Louisa gave me, and I forgot to mail them. She is mad because they were not answered."

"Where are they?" asked Smith, calmly.

"Why, here," said Dobbs, feeling in his pocket. "No! Let me see. Why, I declare, they are in the pocket of my other coat at home. This is awful! Suppose we go right up and explain and try to pacify Louisa?"

They went.

When Dobbs opened the front door he saw a trunk in the hall. Mrs. Dobbs was sitting on the stairs with her bonnet on, crying. She had a bandbox, four bundles and an umbrella with her.

"Louisa, what on earth is the matter?" exclaimed Dobbs.

"I am going to leave you! I'm going back to father's to live."

"Wh-wh-what does all this mean?" Dobbs shrieked.

"It means that I have found my letters to Mrs. Smith in your coat pocket! You never mailed them. I believe you did it on purpose, to make trouble and break my heart. I will leave you, monster, forever!"

Then Dobbs called Smith in, and Mrs. Dobbs was gradually soothed. When Dobbs promised her a new breastpin and a patent preserving kettle, she even smiled. But when she has letters to post now she takes them to the office herself.

Modesty Explained.

Foreigner—Many of you Americans have distinguished ancestors, yet you never mention them. Why is that?

American—It's this way. While we are poor we are ashamed to boast, and when we get rich we don't need ancestors.

THE CURSE OF THE GEISHA GIRL;

... OR ...

FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION.

BY CONSTANCE BEATRICE WILLARD.

[Copyright by W. D. Boyce Co.]

Begun in No. 25, June 18. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"Love purifies, and raises to great heights of courage one who loves truly."

In a tiny room, which once served as a temple, were gathered a strange party the following morning. The relief party had wandered about all night, beating the ground thoroughly, and just at dawn the girls had been discovered in this forsaken temple. As they started to go to the rescue the chair bearers had dashed off, bearing the chairs and leaving the entire party stranded. For a few minutes, however, but little attention was paid to the loss, when Rose suddenly gave an exclamation, and turning they saw their bearers returning, re-enforced by some fifty other coolies.

In almost less time than it takes to describe it the men had put the women inside and began to barricade the doorway, so that by the time the coolies advanced they had a shelter behind which they could fire. Although not heavily loaded, each man was a dead shot, and every bullet told, the screams of pain making the situation all the more horrible.

The temple had been hewn into the solid rock, and had several chambers, so that with the small opening partially closed, even, it was a secure shelter until assistance arrived. The first reception of the coolies appeared to dampen their ardor, and they withdrew to some distance to deliberate.

The twins crept back to their men folks as soon as allowed, and Rose, who was less frightened than Lilly, told their story:

"Lilly received a message telling her that if we would come out to Happy Valley, to a certain place indicated, this abandoned temple, we would learn something we wished to know."

"What was that, Rose?"

"Rose turned to Lilly. "May I tell?" she asked, and Lilly bowed her head.

"The message said that we would learn all about the geisha girl," she said gently, and then, turning away her face from Vambrace's hurt expression, she continued:

"Lilly felt she must go immediately, and without stopping to think what it meant to us and you, we took chairs. The men were in league with the others."

"What others, Rose?" Vincent asked, his eyes resting upon the sweet face, now dearer than anything else on earth to him, for if the terrible night had done nothing else it had taught him whom it was he loved.

"Lilly's amah, and, I am afrid, Mrs. Humphries," pointing to that person, who stood leaning against the pagan altar and looking like some beautiful goddess with her magnificent curves and lines, and her rich hair hanging about her. As he gazed upon her, Vambrace gave a startled cry, then moved so as to get another view of the tragic picture.

"You have good reason for such a statement, darling, or I know you would never make it," Mr. Churchton said gravely, as he kept one eye on his darlings and the other on the waiting colies.

"Yes, uncle. I have never quite liked her; Lilly has, for she loves every one, dear girl, but I have thought she had something back of her that gave too much experience. At any rate, when we arrived here we were dragged in by Lilly's amah, who burst into strange cursings and ravings, but kept us captives. Among other things she said that Mrs. Humphries had helped her because she hated me. The amah's wrath was directed against Lilly. For this we were to be sold into slavery to the fierce mountain tribes."

Lilly began to cry again and to say that she had not realized that such was their fate.

"It was not," Rose returned, "for I would have killed us both first."

The scene was one which might be profitably produced upon the stage. The rough walls, with the little stone altar on which was squatting a hideous Buddha, with broken features and disfigured body. In this small space were crowded the four men, of whom Mr. Churchton was in full evening dress; the twins in their crumpled organdies, now torn and soiled, and the other woman, still dressed in her filmy gown of the afternoon, although it, too, was utterly ruined. Still proud and stately she stood, one firm, white hand supporting her as she rested it against the altar, the other hanging loose by her side. In the shadow of the grotto the red hair had lost its life, and hung like a heavy pall about her. Suddenly Vincent said in a low voice:

"A man never realizes what a woman is to him until he passes a night like this," startled out of his usual reserve by his emotion.

At the sound of his voice, the woman turned, bringing her profile into startling relief, and stretched out a hand as though to ward off a blow. At that moment Vambrace recognized her, and, with an oath, sprang at her:

"By God! I vowed I would go to the end of the world if necessary to find you, Villa Yeamons."

To but one person had this name any significance, and he forgot for the moment to watch the coolies outside, so startled was he.

"I have hunted you in every civilized country in the world after I chased you out of London, for it was after that that poor Bob wanted to have news of you and feared that you had made way with yourself. Fiend in human form, have you anything to say for yourself?"

Raising eyes heavy with woe, and laden with the sorrows of the damned, the woman looked him straight in the face as she said slowly:

"Nothing."

"What excuse have you for intruding yourself upon my girls with your story of lost letters and purse?" Mr. Churchton cried angrily.

"None."

"Mrs. Humphries," Rose said in a low voice, "even if we girls did not give you the sympathy perhaps we ought, how could you design for us the fate you did? We had done nothing to you," and the tender voice faltered, while Lilly sobbed bitterly.

Then the statue was shaken into life, and the woman cried with all the misery of the ages in her rich, full voice:

"You did nothing to wrong me? Why, child, all the rest of the world is revenged on me for the torment you have made me endure," and the proud head bent, and the hands covered the face.

"How was it you did not recognize her before?" Mr. Churchton asked hurriedly, and Vambrace replied in an equally low tone:

"Her hair is dyed and her features altered by one of those French experts, I suppose. Then her figure has matured considerably. Still, I felt I had seen her before, and that night she fainted at the theater and fell forward I was so forcibly reminded of a picture my brother painted of her as Mary Magdalene that had it not seemed impossible I would have sworn that she was Villa Yeamons."

While these marvelous disclosures were engrossing those inside, the coolies had rallied and decided to accomplish by strategy what force would not effect. Mr. Churchton, intensely interested in the discovery of Mrs. Humphries' identity, had forgotten entirely about the half-baricaded door, when through the little opening suddenly bounded an object which sizzled ominously. Before any of the others could move, Vincent sprang to his feet, caught the bomb in his hands, and dashed the few feet to the door, then darted outside the shelter, and with a strength none knew he possessed, threw the deadly weapon far out into the midst of the coolies. An instant later there were two explosions, one that of a gun, the other a much louder one which sent into another world many of the ignorant coolies, and utterly scattered the others.

A sigh of relief went up from the little party, then Rose gave a cry, and it was her own tender flesh which kept Villa Yeamons from falling to the ground. A second later she cried:

"Why, she's wounded!" and then they knew something of the sublimity of love. Knowing that Vincent would be exposed before any of the others could act she had run after him, and as the bullet sped for his heart she had thrown herself in front of him and received it in her own bosom.

As they bent over the dying woman whose life blood was spouting forth as her head lay in Rose's lap, Vambrace heard her say:

"Tell him to forgive," then her eyes opened and the feeble arms raised.

"Vincent!" the low voice cried.

"Vincent," Rose pleaded, and the young man whose high-minded spirit had been offended by the love of the living woman, now knelt beside the dying one and took one of the cold hands in his.

A smile of unearthly sweetness transfigured the features, and then the lips whispered:

"Kiss me."

As he hesitated, Rose, whose eyes were blind with tears, looked her entreaty, and, bending, Vincent laid his lips upon those already stamped with the seal of death.

The great blue eyes opened, then once more the lips said:

"Forgive," and then it was a dead woman whose head lay in Rose lap, in a bed of red hair, which a stray sunbeam or two of gold stealing in through the doorway turned into molten gold.

With their nerves all quivering from their experiences, all thought of their return to the hotel, and Vambrace decided to go with Alex to look for chairs, when a wild voice cried:

"You have yet to deal with the curse of the geisha girl," and it was with horror that all looked in the direction of the voice.

CHAPTER XIX.

"The curse of the geisha girl."

There in the dim light stood the same vision which had caused Rose to faint the night of the Government ball, and made many others shudder—a geisha girl whose face, now that it was seen close by, was wrinkled and old, despite the paint.

"Touki-San!" Vambrace cried, almost beseechingly.

The strange little figure standing there by the body of the dead woman simply shrugged her shoulders, and then muttered:

"The curse of the geisha girl."

A sudden pall appeared to have settled down over them all. The horror they had felt; their lack of food; the sadness of the death of Villa Yeamons, and the knowledge that there were many bodies lying outside, killed by the bomb intended for them, seemed to paralyze them all; then Alex stepped forward and asked roughly:

"What geisha girl are you gassing about, anyway?"

"The bride of the tempest, the wife of that man," the woman cried wildly.

Alex laughed scornfully.

"Well, I guess not. If you said his mother your age would fit in better. Whose bride were you, anyway?"

Suddenly light was beginning to break upon them all, and what had seemed just retribution was but cruel persecution.

"The husband who swore never to desert me, and yet a week after left me, never to return until lately. Then he came, and, Quinton Vambrace, I hold you and all your future in the hollow of my hand. Upon you and yours has been pronounced the fatal curse of the geisha girl," and the little figure swayed back and forth.

Lilly suddenly spoke, her voice quivering with excitement:

"I believe she is my amah."

The woman laughed madly.

"Yes, I stole into your house as one of the hated Chinese. There I found one more wicked than I—the white devil there. Together we listened and planned. The parrot is mine, and I taught it the words 'forever and forever,' and you were frightened, my brave man," turning tauntingly toward Vambrace.

"Who wronged you so?" Rose cried suddenly, running up and turning Vambrace toward the light. "Look closely. His hair is free from white; his face is young. You are wrinkled and old. Was it not his father?" as a sudden inspiration seized her.

The mad light died out of her eyes. The quaint, pitiful little figure tottered, and the black robe, embroidered with red serpents, fluttered in a gust of wind which blew into the cave.

Lifting her old, worn face, the poor, half-crazed woman said feebly:

"You are not he—who are you?" when, without a moment's warning a great, jagged streak of lightning came into the tiny opening, seemingly from a clear sky, striking the Japanese, and a second later what had been a source of much anxiety and trouble to many was but a charred bit of humanity, huddled by the side of her companion in guilt.

With tears in his eyes Mr. Churchton cried:

"Oh, my boy, my boy! Why not have confided in us from the first?" but Vambrace answered, standing bareheaded in the presence of death:

"My father was the guilty party. I am thought to be like him during his younger days. The knowledge of this killed my mother and marked me with the horrible prenatal fear of storms. He made me promise never to reveal the story while she was living," pointing to the little bundle.

"But, Quinton, it might have ruined your life."

Squaring his shoulders and raising his head proudly, he replied with dignity:

"I gave my father my word upon the honor of an English gentleman."

CHAPTER XX.

"True love banishes the long-lived fatal curse, and lifts it from the generations to follow."

A wedding is always entertaining, but when it is a double one, and the brides are twin sisters, public interest is brought to its utmost notch. The day had at last arrived when the Greencastle sisters were to be married in Old Trinity, at high noon.

Immediately after the events detailed in the last couple of chapters, the entire party had started, via India, for London, but just as they were embarking Vambrace had received a cablegram saying:

"The uncle is gone. Come home to me if you can. BOB."

And with a heavy heart Vambrace started for St. Petersburg, where his brother had been spending several months. It was in his heart to ask Lilly to marry him without further delay, but Rose induced him to wait.

"It would be so sad for poor Lilly, away from us all, and then she would distract you from your brother," she pleaded, and the one bridegroom traveled the path which led to duty, while the other, after a little conference with his uncle, sailed for San Francisco. It was there a reduced party met which finally went to India, Egypt and Paris, where magnificent clothing was purchased for the girls. Alex developed a perfect genius for unearthing curios, insisting upon buying them and presenting them to console him for his loss of a bride. At last his uncle promised that he should have an automobile of the latest pattern immediately upon his arrival home if he would refrain from buying things for which neither of the girls could have any use.

Vambrace took his brother to Italy with the first chill winds, and so did not see Lilly when the party passed through London, but before they landed in New York he cabled them:

"Bob died last night. I am coming over as soon as possible. QUINTON."

"Then Quinton is an Earl!" Lilly cried, when the message was read.

"Poor Quinton!" Rose sighed.

"Yes, his name is Quinton Albert George Clarence Lord Tasmayne, Earl of Stonniton," Lilly continued, and she never forgot' that it was as the future Countess of Stonniton that she was fitting herself.

When Lord Tasmayne arrived he looked worn and unhappy, but he begged that the wedding might take place upon the date fixed, the eighteenth birthday of the two girls.

"It was one of Bob's last wishes," he said a little brokenly. He also insisted, when he learned Lilly's wishes, upon having it celebrated with the contemplated splendor.

Never before had Old Trinity looked so beautiful as upon that wedding morn. It was profusely trimmed with lilies and white roses, and as the two brides stepped from the carriage under the awning, thousands of their namesake flowers covered the ground. As they advanced into the church, those standing about in the street held their breath, for surely never before had there been two such beautiful girls, or such perfect types of their several styles.

Lilly walked first, a perfect specimen of stately young maidenhood, the orange flowers in her golden hair, entwined with diamonds, many of which had been in the Tasmayne family for hundreds of years, for the Earl of Stonniton had reset the family jewels for his bride. The flowers in her perfectly-gloved hand were lilies, and her prayer book was of white velvet, clasped with gold and stamped with the Easter lilies.

Behind her was Rose, who was prouder of her pearls than her sister of her diamonds, for Vincent had received the money which paid for them as fee in a famous case where he apepared for the defendant, and cleared him honorably and completely against heavy odds. The little prayer book in the hands of the second bride had been rebound for the occasion, but it was the same out of which she and Vincent had often prepared Sunday school lessons, one which she had carried during her entire girlhood.

At the altar stood the bridegrooms, both handsome, manly and proud, while Alex was hovering in the background, carefully watched by all parties for fear something a little worse than usual would be forthcoming. There were no bridesmaids, for neither wished it, the sisters preferring to be escorted each by the other

When the solemn voice of the clergyman rang out out the flower-laden air, "Quinton, wilt thou take this woman Lillian," the strong Englishman shivered as he remembered all that had transpired since he had first seen that lovely face, and then he looked forward with his pride of race and name to the long years before them when she would help him bear his honors and bring up his children to be a support of the throne, and his voice rang out clear and full.

To Vincent the question came in another way. His thoughts went backward to the day when he had been brought into his uncle's home and presented, a sickly, awkward boy of thirteen. He remembered who it was that had shared her choicest things, child though she was. Year by year he had watched her grow to womanhood, and as he realized that he was securing the lodestar of his existence, his emotion checked him, and his response was very low.

Lilly always did things correctly, and as the future Countess of Stonniton, Lady Tasmayne, did she say her "I do."

And little Rose! So occupied was she in seeing that the others were comfortable, that uncle looked really happy, and that Lilly's train was properly placed, that she had no time at all to think; but then, perhaps during the preceding night she had finished her thinking, for she gave her answer in the happiest way in the world, and actually smiled at the venerable old bishop, just as she used to smile at her uncle.

Ring out the bells for another international marriage; ring out the bells for another union of hearts; peal them loud and long, for youth and beauty, wealth and character, have been united this day, and are destined to bring forth good fruits from generation to generation.

As the bridal couples entered the handsome drawing-rooms where the good man and his four charges had lived so happily, and where Rose and Vincent decided to still make their home, they were welcomed by all their old friends, and the usual wedding reception followed. Alex was really good for once, but, as Vincent remarked, perhaps some of his mischief had been taken out of him by the severe training to which he had been subjected, until he was now down to his usual 150-pound limit. Alex overheard him, and returned sadly:

"No, it's something worse than that. With all these good eatin's going on, I have to keep in training yet, because they are counting on me next week in the gym. contest."

As the afternoon glided away, the brides slipped upstairs and changed their shimmering satin and rare lace for tailor-made costumes of dark blue for Lilly and deep green for Rose, and then they slipped down a side stairs where the bridegrooms, Alex and Uncle were waiting for them. Suddenly just as the brides reached the floor, a fearful peal of thunder shook the very house, and then the heavens seemed to open.

Lilly looked up anxiously into the dear face and clung with two tiny hands to her husband's arm, but he smiled down reassuringly.

"Have no fear, my wife. The curse of the geisha girl died with her, and the fear of the tempest has left me forever."

As the door was opened for the couples to reach their carriages the newsboys were heard crying:

"Japan has declared war on Russia! All about Japan declares war on Russia!"

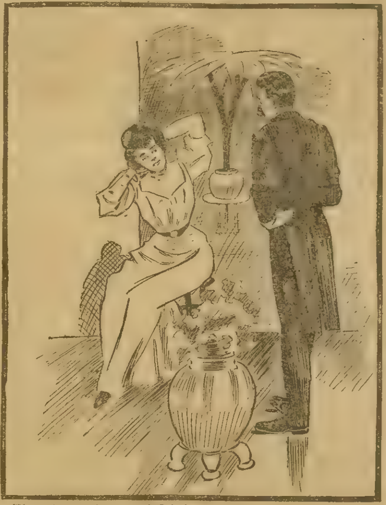
The End.

A Woman Warned.

"And so this is dear little Tommy?" said the pretty young lady. "Come and sit on my lap, won't you, Tommy? There, now, let's be friends. And, oh, Tommy, what would you think if your papa were to bring you a new mamma some day—a nice new mamma who looked just like me?"

"I wouldn't care much," said Tommy, 'but grandma says if he ever makes such a fool of himself as that she'll put poison in her coffee."

HE DREW THE LINE.



"If you attempt to kiss me again I shall call mother."
"Don't, please. I draw the line at kissing elderly matrons.'

MY DOG.

"Dead!" and my heart died with him.
"Buried!' what love lies there.
Gone, forever and ever
No longer my life to share!
"Only a dog!" yes, "only!"
Yet these are bitter tears!
Weary and heartsick and lone,
I turn to the coming years.

Something that always loved me,
Something that I could trust,
Something that cheered and soothed me,
Is mouldering in the dust.
Gentle and faithful and noble,
Patient and tender and brave,
My pet, my playmate and guardian,
And this is his lonely grave!

I go to my empty chamber,
And linger before the door;
There once was a loving welcome—
I listen for that no more;
I sit by my lonely hearthstone,
And lean my head on my hand;
Oh, the best of my wayward nature
Lies low, with my Newfoundland.

One plank, when the ship was sinking
In a wild and stormy sea,
One star, when the sky was darkened,
Was the love of my dog to me.
A star that will shine no longer,
A plank that has missed my hand,
And the ship may sail on or founder—
No watcher is on the strand.

Oh, well may the Indian hunter
Lie calm on his couch of skins,
When the pain of this world ceases,
And the joy of the next begins,
On the happy hunting prairies,
Under bluer skies beyond,
Will not his steed and watch dog
To his spirit call respond?

Blue hunting grounds of the red man,
May not I dream the dream?
Surely, my old companion
Awaits till I cross the stream!
Waits, with a faithful yearning
Almost akin to pain,
Till, in some future heaven,
He bounds to my feet again.

◆

The Mystery at Stainers.

BY MAX ADELER.

Jones was sitting in Stainer's bay window, looking out upon his garden, while Stainer sat with his back to the window, telling Jones a story.

"You know," said Stainer, "Dempsey over here had a dog. Well, Dempsey's dog used to howl, and howl, and howl night after night, in a manner calculated to set a man crazy. At last I made up my mind to stand it no longer; so I——"

"Three!" said Jones, thoughtfully, looking out of the window.

"What did you say?" asked Stainer.

"Oh, nothing, nothing."

"Well, I coludn't stand it any longer, so I went over to see Dempsey, and I asked him what he would take for that dog. Dempsey said he would sell him to me——"

"Four!" said Jones, with a faraway look on his face.

"Did you speak?" asked Stainer.

"No; oh, no."

"Said he would sell him to me for six dollars. So I bought the dog and led him home and killed him. The next day, what do you think Dempsey did?"

"Five!" exclaimed Jones, contemplatively.

"Five, did you say?" inquired Stainer.

"No; never mind me."

"Why, he went out with the six dollars, and bought up two of the most vociferous pups in the State, and, when he turned them into the yard that night, they——"

"Six," observed Jones, calmly, with his eyes staring out into the garden.

"No, they were not sick," explained Stainer; "they were uncommonly well."

"I didn't say they were sick," said Jones.

"Oh, excuse me; I thought I heard you make such a remark. However, Dempsey's pups howled the entire night, so that I didn't sleep a wink. I was pretty mad, but——"

"Seven!" remarked Jones.

"But I wanted to keep peace with Dempsey, so I went over and wanted buy the pups. And Dempsey said——"

"Eight!" observed Jones.

"No, he didn't; he didn't say that! What d'you mean by that?"

"Go on; go right on," replied Jones.

"Dempsey said he would have to ask twelve dollars for the pups. He said his brother-in-law offered him fifteen, but he would let me have them for twelve as a personal favor. So I——"

"Nine!" exclaimed Jones.

"See here, Jones," said Stainer, "what in the thunder is the matter with you? What are you up to, anyway?"

"Why," said Jones, "since I've been sitting here—— Hold up a minute; there goes another! Ten! Since I've been sitting here, about twenty-seven gray cats have rushed across your grass out there, and scrambled up that big maple tree."

"Twenty-seven cats?"

"Well, I've counted ten since you began to talk, and they were flying up the tree ever so long before that! Look! there goes another! Eleven!"

"By George, that is queer!" said Stainer. "I wonder what it means?"

"Holding a ratification meeting, or something, I reckon," said Jones.

"Come along out," observed Stainer. "I'll get my shotgun and pepper a dozen or two."

Stainer got the gun, loaded it with bullets, aimed at the tree, and fired. Not a cat fell. He put in a double handful of slugs and fired again. No cat appeared.

Then Jones said:

"Oh, give me the gun," and Jones loaded it with carpet tacks, and staples, and gravel, and a couple of brass hinges. Then he, also, banged directly into the tree, but with no result; not a cat came down.

Stainer became excited.

"Confound the cats!" he said. "I'll go up the tree myself with a clothes-prop and tear the fur off of them."

When he got to the tree he saw a solitary gray cat—his own house cat—sitting quietly on the ground at the foot of the trunk. He had just begun to examine the upper branches for the other cats when his hired girl came out and said:

"Oh, Mr. Stainer! That cat of ours has been behaving the queerest you ever saw. He has run up this side of the tree forty times, and then right down the other."

"Are you sure it was only one cat, Sarah?"

"Yes, sir, only one. I saw him with my own blessed eyes, sir; the queerest capers I ever did see, sir."

"That'll do, Sarah. You can retire now," and Stainer shouldered his gun, glanced at Jones as if he would like to murder him, and marched into the house.

He will finish the dog story at some future day.

Coming to the Point.

The lovely girl tapped softly at the door of her father's private office There was no response. She tapped a little louder.

"Come in."

She turned the knob and entered.

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

"No, pa."

"Is anything wrong?"

"No, pa."

"Tell father, my girl."

"Well, you see, pa, I want——"

"How much?"

"Wait, pa. Give me time."

"That's something I can't spare."

"Just a minute, pa. I want to give——"

"What will it cost?"

"Don't interrupt, pa. I want to give a young man something.

"Birthday present?"

"Y[illegible]"

"Well, don't come to me. I haven't any idea what a young man wants."

"But I have, pa. I—I know just what he wants."

"Then why do you come to me?"

"Because what he wants is——"

"Oh, that's all right, of course Give him anything you please. Want a check?"

"N—no, pa."

"Oh, speak up!"

"I want you to say it's all right, pa. I want you to say again that I can give him anything I please."

"Silly girl! Of course you can. You've always had your own way. Is that all?"

"Wait, pa. You see, I know just what he wants."

"You said that before."

"Because what he wants is——"

"Well?"

"M-m-me!"

Tableau.

◆

Sunken Treasure.

An Italian company has been formed to recover bullion sunk in Vigo Bay 200 years ago. It has found one of the old galleons at the very outset of its search, an anchor, a chain and some cannon having been brought up as evidence. The salvors have hopes of raising the vesel bodily and removing the contents at leisure. Vigo, a town in northwest Spain, has figured at least four times in the annals of English war. In 1589, the year after the invincible armada, Sir Francis Drake and Sir John Norris wound up an expedition to Portugal by capturing Vigo, burning the city and ravaging the country. It was in 1702, however, in the fighting days of Queen Anne, that the great "affair" occurred. As an old line has it, "in 1702 brave Rooke did strew the depths of Vigo Bay with gold."

War had been declared with France, and Sir George Rooke, who had distinguished himself at La Hogue and afterward took Gibraltar while in command of the united British and Dutch squadrons, received information that Spanish galleons richly laden were then anchored at Vigo. On arriving there he found that the commander of the French escort had protected his convoy by placing them behind an enormous boom formed of masts, yards, chains, cables and casks, but, undeterred, the Torbay, under Vice-Admiral Hopson, crashed through, to be very nearly destroyed, however, by a fire ship. It is said that the latter still had its cargo, which consisted of snuff, aboard, and when it blew up the snuff prevented the flames from making headway.

A complete victory was gained by the allied fleet. According to some accounts five galleons were among the prizes, which had on board 20,000,000 pieces of eight, besides merchandise of equal value. Of the silver fourteen millions were saved and of the goods about five millions. Four millions of plate were destroyed, with ten of merchandise, and about two millions in silver and five in goods were brought away conjointly by the British and Dutch.

FAIR FOLKS

Don't Blame Nature But Investigate.

Many claim they are nervous "by nature" when it is really only because they are slaves to the coffee or tea habit, and this is easily proved by cutting out the coffee or tea for 10 days and using well boiled Postum Food Coffee instead—then comes the change.

"I seemed endowed by nature with a nervous constitution," says a lady of Knoxville, Tenn., "and although I felt tea and coffee were bad for me the force of habit was so strong I just couldn't give them up.

"Someone suggested that I try cereal coffee, but I remembered what insipid drinks we used under that name during the Civil War and so without ever looking into the subject or realizing what progress science has made in this direction I just wouldn't give Postum a trial until finally the W. C. T. U. in our city started an exchange where there were so many calls for Postum it was served regularly and many were thus induced to try it, myself among the number. How delighted I was to find it so agreeable, delicious and satisfying. As I had suffered from nervous prostration a change from tea and coffee was imperative, but all these troubles disappeared after I had used the Postum faithfully for a few weeks.

"A sister and a son-in-law were converted to Postum at the same time and now we all enjoy it as well as we ever did coffee, but instead of making us nervous like coffee we enjoy steady nerves, sleep sound and are in every way better for the change." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

This lady found what she thought was natural nervousness was only due to an acquired taste for coffee that is to some people a sure destroyer of nerves and health. Like her, anyone who cuts off coffee altogether and uses well boiled Postum in its place will be greatly benefited after a few days and the return to health is a joyful journey.

There's a reason.

Look in each package for the famous little book, "The Road to Wellville."

BOYS AND GIRLS CORNER

The Young Castaways;

OR

MAROONED ON A SAND-KEY.

BY ST. GEORGE RATHBORNE.

[Copyright, 1904, by the Author.]

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CHAPTER XXI.

HOW THEY SAILED FROM SAN JUAN.

It was determined to find out early the next morning when a steamer left for some port in the States, though Teddy did not like the idea of traveling back north, after fighting his way down the coast in his little cruiser.

Perhaps, he suggested, they might run across some sailing vessel that was bound for Havana, on board of which the Loon might be shipped, with themselves as passengers. Once at the Cuban capital they could re-embark on a small steamer that plied between that port and Miami on Biscayne Bay in Florida, where their winter could be put in with the mysterious Everglades within reach, filled with opportunities for adventure and exploration, such as must appeal to such a lover of outdoor life as the young Canadian.

They had put up at a hotel which was recommended by Bravo, who had been in San Juan before, and where they were decently treated, so far as food and lodgings went, though Teddy thought things might have been a bit cleaner, to suit his taste.

While the music in the plaza was attractive, and the spectacle of the moving crowds appealed to their sympathies, neither of the boys thought it just wise to mingle with the various groups. Teddy was still uneasy concerning the vindictive skipper, and manufactured all manner of possible dangers that might arise through his desire to please his unscrupulous employer. It is not every boy in these prosaic days who can run across a real romance such as clung about the fortunes of Maro, and the Canadian lad thought it his duty to make as much out of it as possible.

They had a balcony in front of their room, which was in the second story of the hotel facing the square, and by taking chairs outside they could hear the band play, and look down on the crowd without being compelled to rub elbows with them—which Teddy thought was a capital thing, since he had read much concerning the love which all who inherit Spanish blood have for the stealthy use of a knife, as a means of redressing fancied wrongs.

Perhaps he was right after all.

Maro was inclined to believe so when, later in the evening, his attention was directed toward the dark figure of a man who had halted in the shadow of a building, and appeared to be eagerly watching the hotel. He had an idea this was Captain Clawson, and when Teddy had his attention directed toward the same quarter he agreed with him.

They watched without allowing the other to see them, and became convinced that the skipper had certain evil designs upon them, or else he would never have gone to such trouble.

Teddy was for changing their quarters at once, but the other succeeded in laughing this notion down. While San Juan might not be so safe a place as Boston, still under the shelter of the hotel they ought to find a fair measure of security.

All they had to do was to remain in seclusion while darkness lasted, and hasten their departure on the following day, no matter as to whether the boat's repairs had been completed or not. Anything in that line could be carried out at Miami just as well, without their assuming the risk that seemed to cover a further sojourn in the Porto Rico capital.

They double-fastened their doors that night. Indeed, Teddy was that nervous over the affair he proposed sitting up with the gun at hand, ready to repel boarders; but his friend made fun of such a move, and calmed his anticipations of trouble.

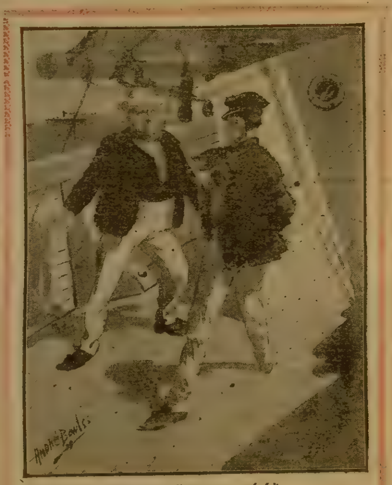
Several times during the night Teddy popped up in bed, and appeared to be listening intently to certain sounds that came from without, and which perhaps in his present highly excited state of mind seemed suspicious to him.

Once he even crawled out of bed and slipped over to the window, under the impression that he had heard some one climbing up on that balcony where he and Maro spent the evening; but investigation did not reveal the shadowy figure of a would-be kidnaper, and Teddy was fain to seek his couch again to doze, and dream of desperate conflicts with the rough sailormen who worked under the skipper.

Perhaps something could be laid to the fact that while cruising the lad had accustomed himself to waking several times during the night, to see if his boat was safe, or the fire burning. Habit is strong in such cases, even when the roof of a friendly caravansary shelters one instead of the canopy of heaven.

Maro was himself sleeping light. This thing of a genuine bed seemed wholly out of place after the rough experiences of the last portion of his life, and one would have to become accustomed to such a luxury by degrees.

So he knew something of Teddy's uneasiness, and secretly chuckled under the covers, which were scanty enough as became a warm climate, though not saying a word at the time. That would do to keep and toss at his friend when he wanted an excuse for teasing him.



"I agree to all you say, my lad."

At any rate, both of the boys were glad enough to see the morning light, and hoped that before another evening they might be away from noisy San Juan, with its music-loving population—away from the skipper of the Nancy Lee, and free from his plottings.

Immediately after breakfast they set out to make a tour of the docks, asking about vessels that were about to sail shortly.

Their journey resulted in but one positive find, and when the balance was struck it was decided to avail themselves of this opportunity to get away.

A [illegible] named the Pompano was loading for [illegible], and expected to sail before dark. Arrangements were made with her captain to convey the little cruiser on deck to the Cuban capital, as well as both boys as passengers.

After lunch they settled their account at the hotel.

It was not difficult to carry their luggage, [illegible] they had made only a few necessary purchases, and these were soon deposited in the little snuggery on board the Pompano which was to be their very own during the cruise across the wide stretch of water.

Then came the task of conveying the boat. The man to whom had been given the job of repairing the same had not even touched his work, after the usual procrastinating manner of Spaniards, though he did not hesitate to spend the advance money which he had demanded and received when accepting the conditions. For this latter Teddy cared little, but he did stand up for his rights when the fellow tried to make him pay the full amount; and it required a threat from Maro to call the police before he consented to acept another small payment and waive his rights—anything rather than have trouble, with a consequent delay in getting away.

A mule and a cart managed to convey the boat to the landing, and our boys drew a breath of relief when they saw the cedar craft safely lodged on the deck of the schooner, lashed to prevent such a catastrophe as its being washed overboard by some mischievous billow.

Going aboard they anxiously waited for the vessel to get under weigh, but evening came on with men still hustling to complete the cargo.

They ate supper aboard and made no complaint, though the character of the food was not such as to arouse enthusiasm, even with lads who had of late been cast upon a sand-key in the Caribbean.

"They're making ready to cast off!" announced Maro, about the time they finished their meal; whereupon Teddy sprang out of the cabin and rushed on deck, to ascertain if the good news were true.

He found it to be so, since the last line had been brought aboard, and they were moving slowly from the dock, the tide carrying the schooner into the harbor.

Dark-faced sailors were hoisting sails and altogether there seemed an air of bustle that was exceedingly pleasing to the Canadian lad.

When finally the wind filled their sails, and they began to actually leave the city astern, our young adventurers felt like giving a genuine shout of pleasure, for it seemed as though their troubles all lay in the shadowy past, and that the future appeared rosy with hope, and the promise of pleasures dear to the boyish heart.

They were weary and did not remain long on deck, though while the lights of San Juan flickered in the distance Maro could not tear himself away.

Teddy must take a last look at the cruiser on deck, as if to assure himself that it was still safe, and then he prepared to follow his friend below.

He found Maro troubled.

"What's the matter—not sick with this little roughness, I hope?" he said, as soon as he caught sight of his friend's face.

"Such miserable luck!" exclaimed Maro, in a disgusted tone.

"What's up now?"

"Oh, he's aboard, that's all," sighed the New England boy, and it was evident that there could be but one person come under that head with Teddy, for he immediately jumped to a conclusion.

"You don't mean Captain Clawson?"

"Yes, I do—met him right on the companionway, when I was coming down here—just as big as life, and so surprised to see me he nearly fell over."

"That settles it—we're in for war," announced Teddy, making a dive for the corner of the little den where he had deposited his shotgun.

CHAPTER XXII.

CAMPING AND CRUISING IN FLORIDA.

This impulsive movement on the part of Teddy caused his friend to smile again, and so he forgot a portion of his troubles.

"The door has a lock, so don't think he's going to break in on us. And I'm sure the look of disgust he gave me was real, so I imagine the old skipper is even more discouraged at finding us aboard than we can feel at seeing him," remarked Maro, laughingly.

Teddy became reassured and condescended, now that he had the gun where he could lay hands on it, to talk over the case reasonably.

"What d'ye suppose brings him aboard the Pompano, if not to get you for that blessed old uncle?" he asked.

"Well, I don't know for certain, you see, but I can give a pretty close guess, and I imagine the old chap's badly rattled over the way things have gone with his miserable business. Perhaps he thought we meant to denounce him to Governor Hunt and have him locked up on the charge of trying to make way with me. That's what we ought to have done, I guess, though I hated to think of staying there to accuse the villain in court. The question that interests us is, what will he try to do, now that he finds we are bound for the same port as himself?"

"But that's a foreign territory, you know, and he needn't have the same fear as at San Juan, where the laws of the United States prevail. We must be wide awake, and not give him any chance to work us any ill. And above all things see to it that you keep away from the rail when on board, and especially at night, for, d'ye know, I imagine from the character you've given this angelic cherub that he'd like nothing better than to push you overboard, under the plea that you owed Davy Jones something for having cheated him before."

So they canvassed the situation this way and that, and agreed on a plan of campaign that held out fair promises.

The skipper must be kept under their eye while the cruise lasted and given to understand that they did not mean to allow any foolishness; that the first movement on his part looking to treachery was to bring a storm upon his head that must be exceedingly unpleasant.

At any rate the presence of the skipper of the lost Nancy Lee had the effect of destroying what pleasure they might have taken in the voyage, which they now prayed might be as brief as possible.

The next morning they found the schooner bowling along under a full spread of canvas, and with a lumpy sea; but both boys were fair sailors, and this sort of thing possessed a certain amount of charm for them—if only that ogre were absent.

The skipper avoided them all day, though he came to his meals, sitting at the other end of the table, and joining in the general conversation.

He was plainly ill at ease, and Teddy did not know whether this came from his fear of future trouble because of what he had done, or that he contemplated further desperate tactics.

Maro meanwhile was making up his mind to beard the tiger in his lair, and lay the ghost that haunted them. In other words,

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he made it a point to join the skipper the very next time he saw him on deck, and force him into conversation, showing him how it would be twice as profitable to come over to the side of one against whom he had been plotting—how Uncle Simon was sure to turn upon him sooner or later, and cast him off without reward.

He found a ready listener, for Captain Clawson, while not suffering very much from remorse on account of his evil deeds, realized that what the boy spoke was true, every word of it, and he eagerly grasped this chance to pull out of a nasty hole with a sound craft.

"I agree to all you say, lad, and if you promise to pay me double what he said he would, after you get your money I mean, of course, I'll stand by ye and make old Simon squeal pretty lively. I owe him a pretty lot on account of past things, where he's squeezed me hard. Is it a go, Maro?" he asked, eagerly.

The boy despised a treacherous nature, but he had enough of the lawyer in him to see just how his case might be profited by such a turncoat. When thieves fall out honest men get their due, and he meant to call his scheming relative to book when once more in the North. It was time the estate was put in the hands of responsible trustees who would manage it with an eye single to the benefit of the owner, and not with an idea of some time coming into possession themselves, as was the case with Uncle Simon.

So peace was patched up between those who had eyed each other askance. Maro could sleep more comfortably, while as for the skipper, he need not anticipate trouble when they cast anchor in Havana harbor.

Nevertheless, that cautious Teddy would not hear of his friend being on deck after dark, but insisted on accompanying him constantly, patrolling the scanty promenade and sitting alongside the Loon, where the owner might run his hand caressingly along the smooth side of the jaunty craft that held his affection, even as the Arab of the sandy desert loves his proud and faithful steed.

He did not believe the leopard could change his spots, and hence, in his mind the Yankee skipper must always be associated with plots and schemes, so that his most innocent movement had a dark meaning back of it.

Teddy frankly admitted that such a feeling toward a repentant sinner was far from charitable; but then he declared it would have made considerable difference with him had the captain really and truly expressed sorrow for his misdeeds, and a desire to turn over a new leaf. As it was he only changed his cards through policy, and in the hope of bettering himself financially, as well as avoiding unpleasant consequences on account of his underhand treatment of Maro.

The weather interested them considerably, as it must all who take a sea voyage in subtropical latitudes, where sudden storms are an ever-present possibility, and hurricanes not unknown.

Surely they had seen enough stress of weather, and deserved some pleasant sailing for a change; and it seemed as though old Boreas must be of the same mind, wearied of persecuting these young voyagers, for day after day the breeze held favorable, now dying away to a mere zephyr, and anon bursting out in sturdy puffs that brought about a sudden shortening of sail, lest they meet with mishap, but ever in a favoring quarter, and wafting the argosy toward the shores of the new Cuban republic that was fostered by the arm of Uncle Sam.

If Captain Clawson had contemplated any more treachery, he lacked either the ability or the nerve to attempt it, for while the journey lasted he was suave and polite, offering no cause for suspicion; nor was Maro at all afraid to remain alone on deck, though his comrade would persist in hovering near at such times, ready to throw himself into the breach should the occasion call for such energetic action.

When, after skirting the northern shore of Cuba, they finally came in sight of grim Morro Castle, guarding the harbor as in the days when the red and yellow banner of old Spain fluttered from the staff, our pilgrims were ready to breathe a sigh of relief, for they knew Maro's native land now lay but a night's sailing beyond.

"I'll be mighty glad to step on the old soil again," said Maro, just as though he had been absent for years instead of weeks; but as one contemplates the variety of adventures through which fortune had led them, it does not seem so surprising that they should feel this way, for really they had lived years since the time when Teddy boarded the derelict and found Maro fastened in his hole, a prisoner.

It was daylight still when they sailed past the fort, and came in sight of the wreck of the Maine, that mute monument to the valor of American soldiers.

Teddy felt as though he might be called as much of a Yankee as the next one, a cousin at the very least; and he surveyed that projecting mass of twisted steel with almost as holy emotions as his comrade, to the manner born.

They did not wish to go ashore until the morning, though Clawson was away as soon as the schooner tied up to a floating buoy; possibly because he feared lest Maro meant to cage him, and that all his promises were empty words; for men who hold their own vows lightly are very apt to ascribe the same lack of honor to their fellows.

No one was sorry to see him go, and he had given directions where a letter would always find him, when the time came that his evidence would be needed in order to scare Uncle Simon into relinquishing his greedy grip on the young fellow's property.

It was something of a treat to sit on deck and survey that wonder city with its myriad lights, pondering on what strange things had happened there within the last few years.

Long the boys lounged there and talked, recalling the events preceding the war with Spain, and during the time of Weyler's rule.

Maro wondered if his friend would ever get entirely over his belief that Clawson meditated evil against them, and imagined he would see Teddy circulating around many a lonely campfire in the heart of the Everglades, endeavoring to locate some suspicious sound, under the belief that it proceeded from the scheming, unscrupulous skipper of the defunct Nancy Lee.

Of course they went ashore, for the opportunity of visiting this gay Cuban capital comes not every day, and may not be lightly cast aside. There were many things they wanted to see, and which they had of necessity only known through print. Besides, the little boat plying between Miami and the Cuban metropolis was late that day, and they would have plenty of time to effect the transfer of the Loon in the afternoon.

So they landed at a famous dock and proceeded to take in as much of the city as could be done during a limited stay.

Dining at the finest hotel, Maro spent half an hour in writing an account of his adventures, which letter he forwarded to a lawyer friend in Boston, with instructions to do what he considered best in the premises, looking to an unheaval in the spring, when the writer intended to make it hot for his uncle, with the idea of ousting him from his post as guardian.

It might just as well be stated right here that the lawyer commenced proceedings against Uncle Simon, with the intention of placing him under the scrutiny of the court, so that, if warned through his villainous colleague, Clawson, he could not take advantage of Maro's absence to turn any of the estate into money and fly the country.

Maro eventually had him removed, and the court appointed as guardian one in whom the lad had every confidence, so that he could be sure of coming into his inheritance when of age.

This all occurred in the spring, for he spent the balance of the winter in company with his friend, just as though matters of money occupied but a small share of his thoughts, which was just like a boy.

And they did have a genuine picnic, to be sure, knocking about in those numerous mysterious lagoons which may be found around the river known under the name of Miami; and later in the season making their way by railroad to Lake Worth, where the cedar boat was again wedded to the water, and their cruise toward the north began.

There was not much of the far-famed Indian river that this daring couple failed to explore. They fished and hunted and feasted on the best that might be found in this favored land, the fruits of the soil and of the sea paying toll to their purse, or their prowess as disciples of Isaak Walton and Nimrod.

It paid for all the discomforts which they had suffered during the period of their marooning on that lone sand-key; and yet, while there were many unpleasant things connected with that experience, as usual these would be forgotten as time wore on, and only the delightful happenings remembered. Indeed, even the discomforts can be changed into humorous episodes, affording a good laugh whenever the tale is retold.

And here we may safely leave those whose fortunes it has been our pleasure to follow through these pages, confident that they possess the sterling qualities of manliness to carry them successfully through life's struggles.

The End.

A SPRING CHICKEN.

"Where are you going, my pretty maid?"
"I'm going a-milking, sir," she said.

"Where is the dairy, my pretty maid?"
"I'm not in a dairy, sir," she said.

"What is your meaning, my pretty maid?"
"I sing in the chorus, sir," she said.

"The merry-merry, my pretty maid?"
"That is the answer, sir," she said.

"Pray take these jewels, my pretty maid."
"O, thank you kindly, sir," she said.

"You're sweet enough to eat, pretty maid."
"I'm a 'broiler,' sir;" she said.

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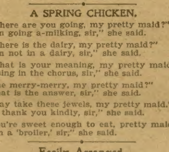

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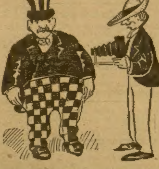

"Ah, thank you! Look pleasant, please!"

Ministers may come and ministers may go, but the choir feud goes on forever.

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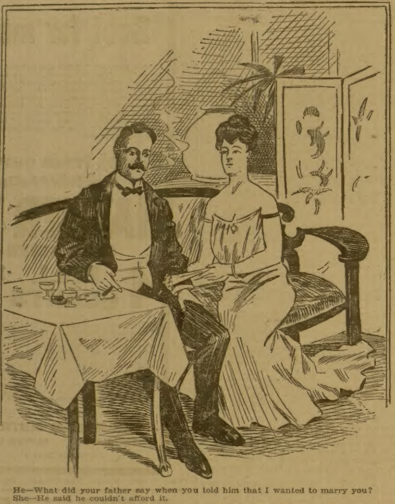
WHAT FATHER SAID.



He—What did your father say when you told him that I wanted to marry you?
She—He said he couldn't afford it.

Items of Interest.

A man's hair turns gray five years sooner than a woman's.

Some elephants have been known to live two hundred years.

The sparrows in this country endeavor to avert race suicide. Here they hatch six times a year; in England rarely more than three.

The deepest hole in the earth ever dug is in the coal fields of Paruschowitz, Upper Silesia. It extends to a depth of 6,570 feet, or almost a mile and a quarter.

The male Sandwich Islander has a queer idea of female beauty. He admires bulk and plumpness. A woman weighing 250 pounds is considered twice as beautiful as one of 125 pounds.

An albino deer, with a coat as white as snow, and eyes a delicate pink, was recently killed in the Canyon Mountains of southern Oregon. It was one of the very few albino deer ever seen in the mountains of the West.

The family of a dead Japanese soldier gets as a pension about one-third of the pay of his rank. This would give the widow of a private $1.25 a month; of a first lieutenant, $6.25; of a captain, $8.33; and to the widow of a colonel, $20 a month.

The largest cantaloupe farm in the world will be that which is to be planted near Greeley, Colo., the present spring. It will embrace 2,000 acres. Hitherto cantaloupe raising in Colorado has been mostly confined to the famous Rocky Ford district, in the Arkansas Valley.

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Brief Yarns.

When George Roberts was president of the Pennsylvania Railway he chided a conductor who went by him without loking at his pass. "No matter if you do know who I am," said Mr. Roberts, in reply to the conductor's excuse; "I am entitled to a free ride only when I am traveling with that pass. You don't know whether I have it or not." The conductor, a little nettled, then demanded to see the pass. "That's right!" exclaimed the president; "here—why—where—well, I declare! I must have left it at the office." "Then you'll have to pay your fare," said the conductor, firmly. And so Mr. Roberts did. His lecture cost him $5.

President Eliot of Harvard dined recently at a New York hotel, where the man who takes care of the hats at the dining-room door is celebrated for his memory about the ownership of headgear. "How do you know that this is my hat?" the collegian asked, as his silk tile was presented to him. "I don't know it, suh," said the doorman. "Then why did you give it to me?" insisted President Eliot. "Because you gave it to me, suh," was the reply.

"Exactly how old are you, anyway?" asked a friend of Lillian Russell. "I have a friend," replied the actress, with apparent irrelevance, "who was born in midocean, on an ocean. After she and her mother had landed, landed, the steamer, on its return trip, blew up. So, practically, she has no birthplace. My age is like that," she added, after a pause.

Quaint Bits.

Edmund Burke once showed a painting to Sir Joshua Reynolds, whose opinion he invited. Sir Joshua looked long and attentively at it. "Well," he said, "I really don't know what to say. It's a cleverish thing, but whether there's sufficient promise in it to justify my advising the young man to adopt art as a calling I really cannot say." It was Reynolds' own work done many years before.

Fifty years ago the British Minister at Dresden, Mr. Forbes, had three little dogs of the Pomeranian breed, one black, one gray and one white. When the court was in mourning he went out with dog No. 1, when it was in half-mourning with dog No. 2, and when all was going well, with dog No. 3.

Ambrose Austin, an English musician, had a parrot. On one occasion the late Duke of Edinburgh, son of Queen Victoria, spoke to it. Thereupon the parrot angrily said, "You're a snob!" to the horror of its loyal owner and the delight His Royal Highness.

As Compared.

"Having traveled a great deal," remarked the reporter who was interviewing the dime-museum freak, "I suppose your ideas are rather broad."

"Oh, my ideas are broad enough," answered the living skeleton, "but I never fully realized the narrowness of my existence until the manager put me on the platform with the obese lady."

When a girl stops trying to make a young man jealous he may as well pull out of the game.

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Primary, Secondary or Tertiary Blood Poison Permanently Cured. You can be treated at home under same guaranty. Capital $500,000. We solicit the most obstinate cases. We have cured the worst cases in 15 to 35 days. If you have taken mercury, iodide potash and still have aches and pains, Mucus Patches in Mouth, Sore Throat, Pimples, Copper-Colored Spots, Ulcers on any part of the body, Hair or Eyebrows falling out, write for proofs of cures. 100-page Book Free.

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This marvelous invention can be worn undetected. A Godsend to men and boys. Indorsed by physicians. No drugs, no belt, no C. O. D. fraud. Write for illustrated book, sent free in plain sealed envelope. Strictest confidence observed.

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MEN AND WOMEN

CURE YOURSELF!

Trade Mark BIG G Price $1.00 CURES in 1 to 5 days. Guaranteed not to stricture. Prevents Contagion. THE EVANS CHEMICAL CO. CINCINNATI, O. U. S. A.

Big G is a nonpoisonous remedy for Gonorrhœa, Gleet, Spermatorrhœa, Whites, unnatural discharges, or any inflammation, irritation or ulceration of mucous membranes. Non-astringent.

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or sent in plain wrapper, by express, prepaid, for $1.00, or 3 bottles, $2.75. Circular sent on request.

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A Ghost Story.

Recently, it is said, an army captain—a "quiet, thickset, level-headed man, with a clear eye, a strong will and common sense"—went to dine with some lady friends at an old Dutch manor house at Stellenbosch, in South Africa. On his arrival he was startled by the appearance on the veranda of a huddled-up old woman, "with a long yellow face and thin lips," and later on in the evening, when, after some music in the drawing room he returned to the dining room for whisky and soda, he noticed that a half-length portrait hanging on the wall was swaying from side to side with a slow, deliberate swing, and that the eyes of the man it represented were watching him enviously. Then it seemed to the captain that a fog or mist was rising in the room. It crept up and up till it reached his chin, and then, with a shiver of wild terror, he felt two hands fasten on his throat—hands with thin yet muscular fingers that clutched ever tighter, as if growing strength as they materialized. And the man of the portrait, hanging clear of the gathering mist, still watched him with an evil leer. With an effort he managed to get away, but again, as he hurried from the house, he was startled by the vision of the old, yellow-faced woman.

On the following morning he heard that his friends had left the house and one of them declared that she had been nearly strangled in the night. Afterward the captain discovered that the house for some time had been used as a temporary hospital and that two of the sick, who had been placed in the dining room, had screamed for help during the night, imploring their attendants to take them away, as some one had tried to choke them.

From local inquiries the captain learned that the amiable gentleman whose portrait had brought him so strange an experience had hanged himself about 1810, after strangling his youngest daughter in the dining room. Von Holtz was the name and the legend of the tragedy is still whispered in the district.

Corner on Ice.

An extra piece of ice was wanted. An ice wagon was at a neighbor's door, but there was no small coin in the house wherewith to pay for the desired article.

"Well, never mind," said mamma; "you run out, Blanche, and get a nickel's worth; the man will trust you until tomorrow."

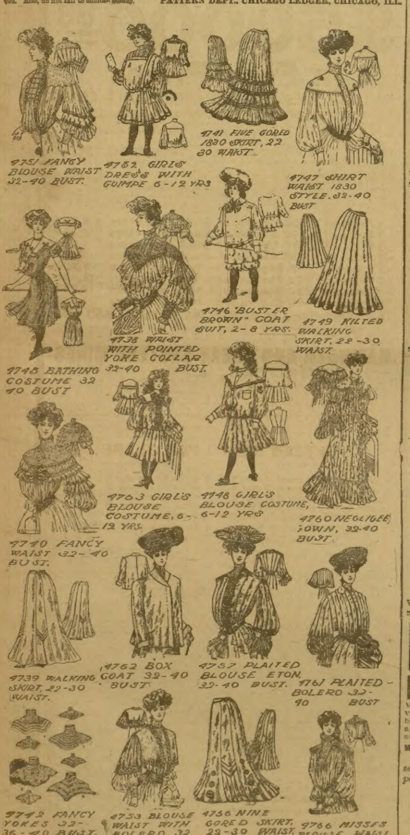
Now Blanche was not accustomed to dealing on credit and did not take kindly to the idea, but was moving very slowly to do her mother's bidding when some words in large letters on the top of the wagon attracted her attention and suggested an unanswerable objection.

"But he won't do it, mamma! Look there on the wagon. It says, 'Not in the trust.' "

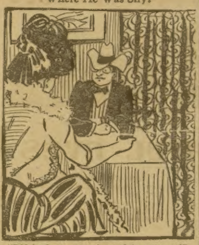
Beautiful Patterns Free---An Unparalleled Offer.

The patterns shown below are furnished us by one of the best, if not the best, pattern manufacturers in New York. They comprise the very latest styles, and are unequalled for accuracy in fit, simplicity in use, and are most economical of material. They sell from the stores from twenty-five to fifty cents each. Full instructions are printed on every pattern. Three months' subscription to the CHICAGO LEDGER for 25 cents and any TWO of these patterns FREE. Six months' subscription to the CHICAGO LEDGER for 50 cents and FIVE of these patterns FREE. This offer is without equal. If you are wise you will take advantage of it at once.

REMEMBER, to avoid mistakes, you must first give the number of the Pattern wanted—second, do not fail to give bust measure for waist, or waist measure if skirt is desired. Unless you do as here stated we will not know what to send you. Also, do not fail to enclose money. **PATTERN DEPT., CHICAGO LEDGER, CHICAGO, ILL.**


4751 FANCY BLOUSE WAIST 32-40 BUST.
4752 GIRLS DRESS WITH GUIMPE 6-12 YRS
4741 FIVE GORED 1830 SKIRT, 22-30 WAIST.
4747 SHIRT WAIST 1830 STYLE. 32-40 BUST
4745 BATHING COSTUME 32-40 BUST
4738 WAIST WITH POINTED YOKE COLLAR 32-40 BUST.
4746 "BUSTER BROWN" COAT SUIT, 2-8 YRS.
4749 KILTED WALKING SKIRT, 22-30 WAIST.
4763 GIRL'S BLOUSE COSTUME, 6-12 YRS.
4748 GIRL'S BLOUSE COSTUME, 6-12 YRS
4760 NEGLIGEE GOWN, 32-40 BUST.
4740 FANCY WAIST 32-40 BUST.
4739 WALKING SKIRT, 22-30 WAIST.
4762 BOX COAT 32-40 BUST
4757 PLAITED BLOUSE ETON, 32-40 BUST.
4761 PLAITED BOLERO 32-40 BUST
4742 FANCY YOKES 32-36-40 BUST.
4753 BLOUSE WAIST WITH BOLERO 32-40 BUST
4756 NINE GORED SKIRT. 22-30 WAIST.
4766 MISSES BLOUSE WAIST. 12-16 YRS

Where He Was Shy.



"Did he have enough sand to propose?"

"Yes, but he didn't have enough rocks to marry."

How His Wealth Grew.

Ascum—Have you seen anything of Jiggins lately?

Dr. Swellman—Yes, I prescribed a trip to Europe for him this morning.

Ascum—Indeed? He's getting wealthy, isn't he?

Dr. Swellman—Well, I can remember when I used to prescribe for him simply a dose of sodium of bromide for the same complaint.

Chronic bargain hunters soon begin to look shopworn.

I CURE FITS

When I say I cure I do not mean merely to stop them for a time and then have them return again. I mean a radical cure. I have made the disease of FITS, EPILEPSY or FALLING SICKNESS a life-long study. I warrant my remedy to cure the worst cases. Because others have failed is no reason for not now receiving a cure. Send at once for a treatise and a Free Bottle of my infallible remedy. Give Express and Post Office.

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This book contains hundreds of wonderful things such as Fortune-telling, Puzzles, Dreams, Charms, Omens, Lucky Signs, Astrology, Verses, Love Tokens, Physiology, Psychology. It is filled with valuable things. Don't buy fakes. This is the genuine. One book by mail, postpaid, 10 cents, 3 for 25 cts. Address

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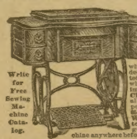

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AT $5.75 upwards we offer for sale the largest assortment in the world of light running and noiseless high-grade pivot and

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that do perfect work, among which is OUR HIGH ARM "CLAYTON" DROP-HEAD MACHINE AT **$8.65** and our wonderful "Faultless" Ball-Bearing Machine at **$13.95** which equals any sewing machine at any price. We have drop-head, drop-desk, upright and automatic styles, in plain or richly carved cabinets, all fitted with our famous "Faultless" extra high and extra long arm heads, which possess all improvements of $40 to $60 machines and many valuable improvements controlled exclusively by us. OUR FREE SEWING MACHINE CATALOG illustrates and describes our machines in detail, tells all about the mechanism and woodwork, gives hundreds of testimonials from people using our machines, and demonstrates decisively that our machines at $5.75 upwards equal any other machines, no matter what the name may be. We guarantee our machines 20 years, ship on easy terms, C. O. D., subject to examination and allow 30 days' free trial in your home. For your own good you should not buy a machine anywhere before seeing our catalog. Write **JOHN M. SMYTH CO.** 208 W. Madison Street, CHICAGO

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Wonderful Music Offer

Hiawatha, The Holy City, and 50 other new songs and two pieces of music FREE to each person who answers this advertisement. We are making this most liberal offer to introduce WOMAN'S WORLD, a large, finely illustrated magazine which has already a circulation of 800,000 copies each issue.

WOMAN'S WORLD is edited by able writers who have followed their profession for many years. It contains a lot of interesting reading matter and numerous departments such as are found only in an up-to-date and high-class paper. To introduce our magazine into thousands of homes quickly, we will send it five months on trial **for only 10 cents** and we will send you free and postpaid 52 new songs and two pieces of music as above stated. Send 25 cents and we will send WOMAN'S WORLD **one year** and the songs and music mentioned above, also our Mammoth collection of **100 songs,** words and music. This is positively the biggest offer ever made by any publisher. We are one of the largest publishing concerns in Chicago, in business over 20 years. If you want a good paper at a low price and a lot of choice music send for either of the above offers. You will be delighted. Address **WOMAN'S WORLD,** Dept. M6 **CHICAGO, ILL.**

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Boys' Names Wanted

THE STAR MONTHLY wants names and addresses of bright boys between 12 and 20 years of age. We want to get them interested in our beautiful illustrated magazine of boys' stories, which has a circulation of 150,000 copies monthly. It is 10 years old. It is the boy's companion; it plays baseball and football with him. It coasts, skates, swims, camps, hunts and fishes with him. It goes to school or to work with him. It chats with him about his future, his ambition to get on in the world. It teaches him how to build his head, heart and body. It has departments on athletics, carpentry, games, puzzles, amateur journalism, mechanism, photography, coin, stamp and curio collecting; prize awards in each department. It never has less than 32 large pages, profusely illustrated, and printed on fine polished book paper. It contains fine stories and handsome illustrations and each month awards a large number of valuable prizes to subscribers. Send us plainly written names and addresses of 12 boys you know and enclose 12 two-cent stamps or a silver quarter and we will enter **you** as a paid subscriber for one year in advance.

The STAR
MONTHLY
3 YEARS FOR $1.00

THE STAR MONTHLY, Dept. 46, OAK PARK, ILL.

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BOYS WANTED TO SELL THE BLADE AND LEDGER

We want a boy in every town to act as agent. We start you without asking a cent in advance. Fill out the blank below and we will send you a bundle of BLADES AND LEDGERS by mail, also report blanks, instructions, and certificate of agency. In this way you can earn a nice sum each week. No experience necessary. We send full instructions so you can begin at once. Tear out the coupon below and send it in.

W. D. BOYCE CO., Boyce Building, Chicago.

GENTLEMEN: I would like to be your agent. I agree to pay you for all papers I sell, less my commission. I also agree to report every week. Please send me a bundle of papers, report blanks, etc. Yours truly,

Name..

Street.............................. *Town*..................................

Date................................ *State*..................................

FOR YOUTHFUL EYES

WANTED A CHANCE.

When I get to be a man
  'S big as pa is,
I'm goin' to do a heap of things
  Which now my ma is
    Set against.
A man can do many things,
  But a boy like me,
Why he' don't get one-half a chance
  To show what he can be.

There's often times when boys of nine,
  Goin' on ten, too,
Would like to have and do some things
  They just pretend to.
They aren't a bit afraid to go
  Down town and all around;
They're never allowed to go alone
  For fear of "Lost and Found."

I'd like first-rate to carry a cane
  Like Uncle Jake has.
I'd like to catch the 8:20 train,
  But I come back as
    I'd be missed.
I'd like to take the ladies out
  When it's dark night,
I'd like to give 'em flowers and things
  If I only might.

The only thing that a boy can do
  He can do as he wants?
    Who knows?
A man can do so many things,
  But a boy like me,
Why, he don't get half a chance
  To show what he can be.

A Strange Tale.

There was once an awful little girl who had an awful way of saying "awful" to everything. She lived in an awful house, in an awful street, in an awful village, which was an awful distance from every other awful place, relates the Boston Herald. She went to an awful school, where she had an awful teacher, who gave her lessons out of an awful book.

Every day she was so awful hungry that she ate an awful amount of food, so that she looked awful healthy. Her hat was awful small, and her feet were awful large. She went to an awful church, and her minister was an awful preacher. When she took an awful walk she climbed awful hills, and when she got awful tired she sat down under an awful tree to rest herself.

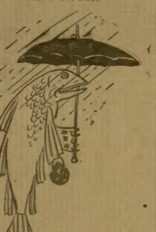
In summer she found the weather awful hot, and in winter awful cold. When it didn't rain there was an awful drought, and when an awful drought was over there was an awful rain. So that this awful girl was all the time in an awful state, and if she does not get over saying "awful" about everything she will, by and by, come to an awful end. And this awful little girl lives in this awful city.

TWO PIES.

If you would know the flavor of a pie,
  The juicy sweet, the spice and tart, you must
Be patient till the fiery core is cool,
  And bite a little deeper than the crust.

If you would know the flavor of a man—
  God's mud pie, made of Eden's dew and dust—
Be patient till love's fire has warmed him through,
  And look a little deeper than the crust.

Likes a Wet Day.



"Can't think why folk make such a fuss about a little rain! Now I enjoy a wet day, and really only put up an umbrella because it might look odd if I didn't!"

Papa and Mamma Out.

"Boo-hoo!" wailed baby, "I want to sleepy-bye. Boo-hoo!"

"Oh, dear!" yawned Sister Belle, "where is everybody? We're so s'eepy."

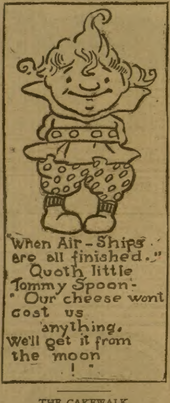
Papa and mamma were out to tea, but nurse was about. Where was nurse, anyway?"

"Boo-hoo! boo-hoo!" yelled baby louder than ever.

Sister Belle didn't know just what to do, but at last a thought struck her. I've often seen nurse do it."

But baby did not like Sister Belle to undress him, and he cried still louder, if that were possible.

So Sister Belle at last sat down on the floor beside baby and got undressed, too, and when mamma came in after a while there were baby, and Sister Belle sound asleep, cuddled together against a chair just like two little rabbits, while Shep, the collie dog, sat and kept watch over them both, not even snapping at a big fly that was tickling his nose!


"When Air-Ships are all finished." Quoth little Tommy Spoon- "Our cheese wont cost us anything. We'll get it from the moon!"

THE CAKEWALK.

Said the Butter to the Sugar: "Will you dance tonight with me
At the cakewalk to be given in the Yellow Bowl? 'Twill be
The smoothest thing you e'er were in before the evening's end,
And the swellest, for the Eggs and Baking Powder will attend:
Spring Wheat Flour will come also and Sweet Milk, too, will be there—
She's the cream of all the gath'ring and as rich as she is fair—
And both Nutmeg and Vanilla may come as a special favor,
I hope they will, their presence to the whole thing would add flavor.
Tall Granite Spoon will lead us through the dance's mystic maze;
He will take us 'round and 'round in a sort of polonaise.
It's sure to be exclusive and a very fine affair
For only the most proper of ingredients will be there;
Yet it's whispered low that later, after the cakewalk turn,
The party all together to the Oven will adjourn;
And if that's true I'll wager a dollar to a dime
The whole affair will wind up with a very hot old time.
—Caroline Mischka Roberts in Good Housekeeping.

Diamonds Are Charcoal.

Is it not strange to think that the precious diamond is only a crystal of the purest carbon? That is the reason it is not fusible and cannot be injured by acids or alkalis. The "fire" in a diamond is brought out in the cutting. Rough diamonds are cheap, for the cutting takes so long and is such a delicate business that it costs a great deal. And yet they must be cut to attain their brilliancy. Diamonds come from India, Brazil and South Africa, and are found in all colors—white, orange, yellow, red, pink, brown, blue, green, black and opalescent.

The pale yellow and brown shades are more common, but the decided hues are extremely rare. Indeed, just one deep red diamond has thus far been found. The most popular clors are pure white, blue-white and a deep golden yellow.

Sayings of the Little Folks.

"Mamma, is this your picture when you was a little girl?"

"Yes, dear, when I was a very tiny girl, indeed."

"Well, mamma, it certainly doesn't look much like you as you look now."

—

"Why, how are you, my little man? Have you any little brothers at home?"

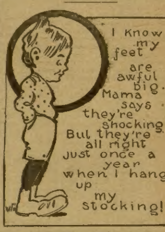
"Yes, sir, I've got lots of brothers; but I'm short of fathers and mothers. I've only one of each!"

—

"Mamma, does the Dipper leak, or what makes it rain so much lately?" asked Marjorie, looking up at the sky, the other evening.

Horses in War.

One of the great needs of the United States army is for a competent veterinary department, says "Our Animal Friends." War horses are in as much danger from bullets or from sickness as are the soldiers, and deserve good attention. Horses are sometimes more used than men in war, especially to transport supplies, without which no forward movement is possible. One of the greatest hindrances to the British commanders during the recent Boer War was the disabling of horses by the hard service of the campaign.


"I know my feet are awful big. Mama says they're shocking But they're all right just once a year when I hang up my stocking!"

Little Willie—Say, pa, what is a remote period?

Pa—A remote period, my son, is the period due at the end of your mother's remarks. Remember, however, I am giving you this explanation in strict confidence.

$5000.00
In Free Prizes
TO LUCKY GUESSERS---FORTUNE'S DOUBLE KNOCK
READ EVERY WORD OF THIS CAREFULLY.

This is no part of a lottery scheme. The prizes offered are intended to take the place of the **Commission** usually paid to brokers but in this case it goes to the purchaser of our stock.

IN order to **quickly** interest investors in their enterprise and **to save brokers' commissions**, the directors of the MAMMOTH AND GREAT EASTERN MINING AND MILLING COMPANY have authorized **the most liberal offer** ever heard of in the history of advertising. It is this—and the conditions are simple:

A NOVEL CONTEST The total popular vote cast for President for all the candidates in the States New York, Ohio and Iowa in 1900 was **3,118,785**

What will be the total vote in the same States in 1904? For the nearest correct estimate received before Nov. 1, 1904, we will give a first prize of 5,000 shares of Mammoth and Great Eastern stock; to the next nearest, a second prize of 2,500 shares; to the next, a third prize of 1,500 shares, and so on down the list of prizes, as follows:

1 Prize of 5,000 Shares of Stock, par value	$ 5,000
1 Prize of 2,500 Shares of Stock, par value	2,500
1 Prize of 1,500 Shares of Stock, par value	1,500
1 Prize of 1,000 Shares of Stock, par value	1,000
10 Prizes of 750 Shares each, total par value	7,500
25 Prizes of 500 Shares each, total par value	12,500
50 Prizes of 250 Shares each, total par value	12,500
75 Prizes of 100 Shares each, total par value	7,500
164 GRAND PRIZES OF A TOTAL PAR VALUE OF	$50,000

The single condition is that each estimate must be accompanied by an order for 50 shares or more of stock at the present low rate of 15 cents per share, and that the estimate must be received before November 1. Prizes will be awarded as soon as the official returns are in. The

MAMMOTH AND GREAT EASTERN MINES

are located in the heart of the great **IDAHO GOLD FIELDS** from which has been taken **$160,000,000 of placer gold alone.** The rich ledges of the Mammoth and Great Eastern and Union Groups are now being developed, and the ore is strictly **free-milling.** The company owns these two great groups of claims, a total of 14 claims, each 600x1500 feet, with every requisite for the cheap mining and milling of ore. Shafts have been sunk and several tunnels made. Assays made range from $43.87 to $3753.19 to ton of ore. The lowest mill run averages $5.65 per ton on the plates (concentrates $124.54). A new 50-ton mill will reduce the total cost of reduction to less than $3 per ton, leaving a sure net profit of $300 per day—$100,000.00 per year—which will be vastly increased by progressive development when the shafts and tunnels are extended to the richer ore bodies. **The possibilities of the Mammoth and Great Eastern properties are almost boundless.**

It is now proposed to sink a shaft on the new property 500 feet, and drift both ways on the ore chutes every 100 feet, blocking out as large a body as possible; also to install a mill at the earliest possible date with at least 50 tons per day capacity and to commence to produce bullion before January 1, 1905. To raise the money required for these purposes, and for the development of all the company's mines, only 100,000 shares of Treasury Stock is now offered at

FIFTEEN CENTS PER SHARE

To dispose of all this Treasury Stock quickly at this extremely low figure the additional inducement of prizes as scheduled above is offered.

An order for 50 shares at 15 cents $ 7.50 entitles the purchaser to 5 guesses
An order for 100 shares at 15 cents $ 15.00 entitles the purchaser to 10 guesses
An order for 250 shares at 15 cents $ 37.50 entitles the purchaser to 25 guesses
An order for 500 shares at 15 cents $ 75.00 entitles the purchaser to 50 guesses
An order for 1000 shares at 15 cents $150.00 entitles the purchaser to 100 guesses

This is the Double Knock of Fortune at YOUR Door. She May Never Knock Again.

The contest closes August 1. After that date the price of stock will be advanced 33⅓ per cent, and no further prizes will be offered.

Remember that the mines of the Mammoth and Great Eastern Mining and Milling Company are not mere prospects, but proven producers. They are backed by sterling business men who make this extraordinary offer **because they want to sell the stock direct to investors without the aid of fiscal agents and other expensive middlemen.**

STARTLING FIGURES

The statement is frequently made "What is the use of investing a small sum in a Mining Company? It will never amount to anything." Read the following and be satisfied: $100.00 invested in the American Eagle (two miles from our property) on January 1st, 1902, is now worth $2000.00. $100.00 invested in the Jumbo (16 miles from our property) on January 1st, 1903, is now worth $1000.00. $100.00 invested in Isabella in '93 is now worth $2480.00 and in addition you would have received $1400.00 in dividends. $100.00 invested in Jackpot in '94 is now worth $6000.00 and in addition you would have received $2000.00 in dividends. $100.00 invested in the Elkton stock in '95 is now worth $2900.00 and in addition would have paid $1900.00 in dividends. $100.00 in Gold Coin stock in '94 is now worth $2000.00 and in addition you would have received $1000.00 in dividends. $100.00 invested in the Homestake of South Dakota when the stock was selling at $1.00 per share is now worth $20,000.00. $100.00 invested in the "Green Consolidated" less than two years ago is now worth $8,700.00 exclusive of dividends. There are hundreds of other properties with like record.

AN ENTERPRISE OF HIGHEST STANDING

The Directors of the Company are the best known men in one of the leading towns of the Dominion of Canada, safe and conservative men of affairs: James Innis, President, Managing Director of the Sutherland Innis Co., Ltd., G. A. Witherspoon, Vice-President, proprietor of the largest drug business in Chatham; William Gordon, Secretary, the largest dry goods merchant in Chatham; Dr. J. R. Battisby, Treasurer, the leading Presbyterian divine of Chatham. The Directory also includes N. H. Stevens, President of the Canada Flour Mill Co., Ltd.; and Mr. Manson Campbell, President of The Manson Campbell Fanning Mill Co., Ltd., of Chatham, Ontario. These men have engaged in a legitimate enterprise—to work the mine, not the investor. This makes non-assessable stock, the proceeds of which go into development, an **Absolutely Safe Investment. Not One Chance to Lose—A Million Chances to Win.** But prompt action is necessary to get in on the ground floor. The stock **will positively advance on August 1st.** Orders for stock accompanied by cash may be sent direct to the company, or to the **Bank of Montreal, Chatham, Ontario, Canada.** Full particulars **FREE.** Write at once for illustrated booklet giving views, maps and valuable facts and figures.

Mammoth and Great Eastern Milling and Mining Company,
Dept. C, Chatham (Ont.), Canada.

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